MAKOTO YUKIMURA

VINLAND SAGA

BOOK·EIGHT

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YUKIMURA
ヴィンランド・サガ
VINLAND
SAGA

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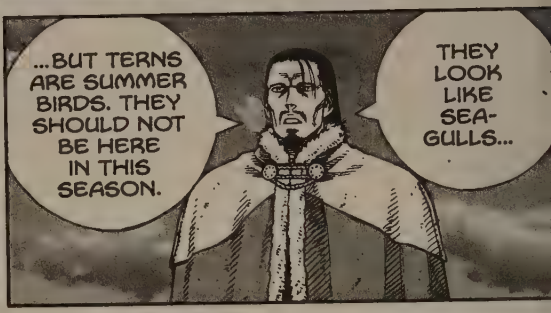
CHAPTER 101: THE FETTERED TERN (1)

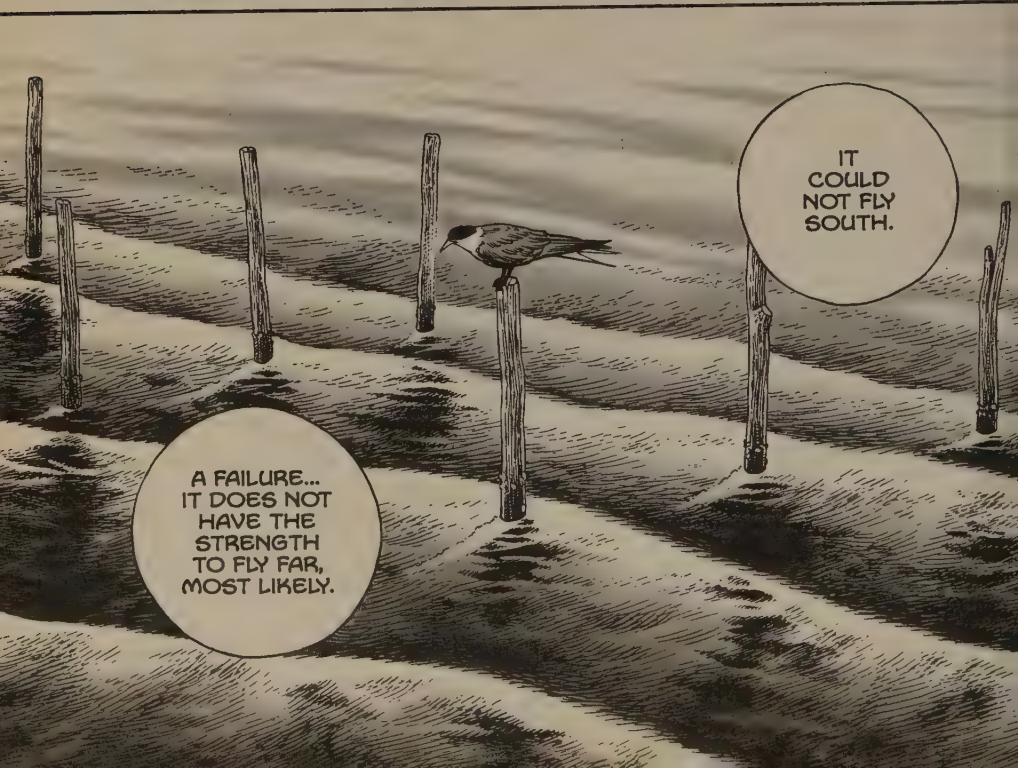
I HAVE RETURNED.
FATHER.
WE SHOOK ON AN OFFICIAL TRANSACTION WITH A WITNESS PRESENT, AS YOU BADE ME.
I'VE SUCCEEDED IN PURCHASING BJARNI'S LAND.

CAAAW...
CAAAW...
CAAAW...
CAAAW...

A TERN?
SCARED ME...
OH.
OHHH.

THERE, ON THE STAKE.


...BUT TERNS ARE SUMMER BIRDS. THEY SHOULD NOT BE HERE IN THIS SEASON.
THEY LOOK LIKE SEA-GULLS...


IT COULD NOT FLY SOUTH.
A FAILURE... IT DOES NOT HAVE THE STRENGTH TO FLY FAR, MOST LIKELY.

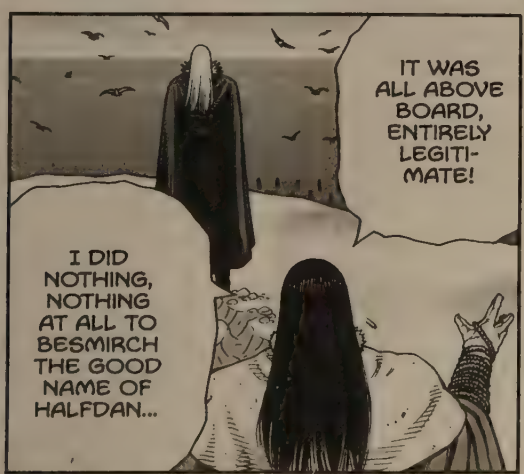
CAAAW...

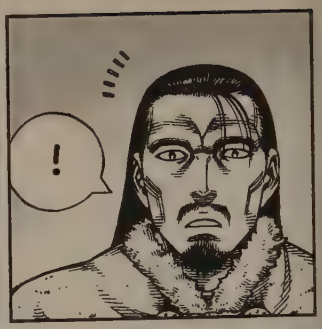
CAAAW...

FATHER.
...UH... UM...

CAAAW...
CAAAW...

IT'S A KRIA.
NO! I DIDN'T!
...HUH?


IT WAS ALL ABOVE BOARD, ENTIRELY LEGITI-MATE!
I DID NOTHING, NOTHING AT ALL TO BESMIRCH THE GOOD NAME OF HALFDAN...


!

HEY! HORSE!
YES, FATHER.
GREET THEM, SIGURD.
SEEMS YOUR BRIDE IS HERE.

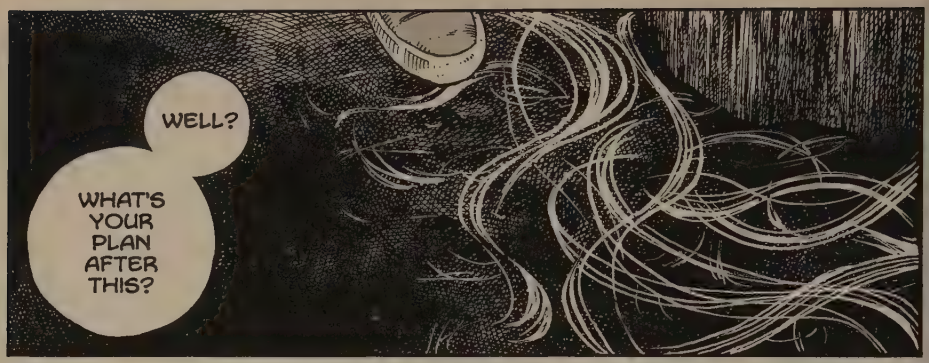
WHOOSH

HMPH.
I DIDN'T KNOW... YOU LIKED BIRDS.
I SEE...
...THEN I MIGHT EVEN KEEP IT.
IF THAT TERN RECOGNIZES ITS OWN LACK OF STRENGTH...
...AND CHOOSES TO SUBMIT TO THESE CHAINS...
Y-YES, SIR!
THANK YOU!
AN EARLY WEDDING PRESENT.
KSHING...
BJARNI'S LAND IS YOURS TO MANAGE, SIGURD.

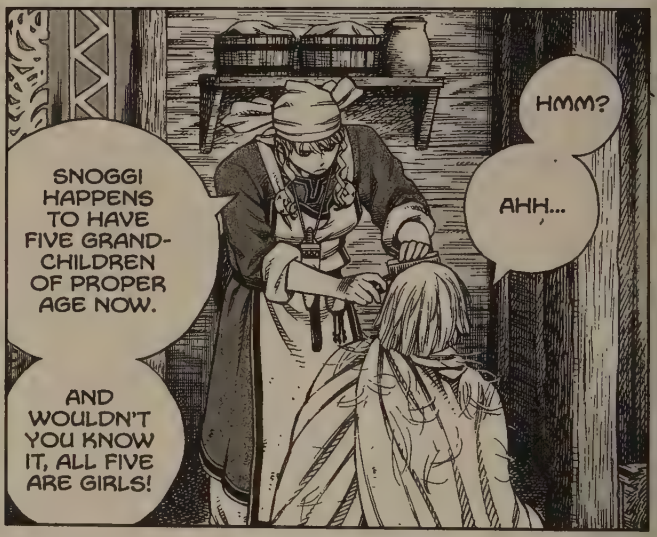
VILLAGE IN SOUTHERN ICELAND
THORFINN'S FAMILY HOME DECEMBER 1018
YOUR HAIR, THAT BEARD! THOSE SCARS!
YOU LOOK LIKE SUCH A RUFFIAN NOW!
I TOLD YOU ALREADY, IT'S NOT MY FAULT I COULDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU.

WOBBLE
WOBBLE
WOBBLE

A KRIA...


WELL?
WHAT'S YOUR PLAN AFTER THIS?

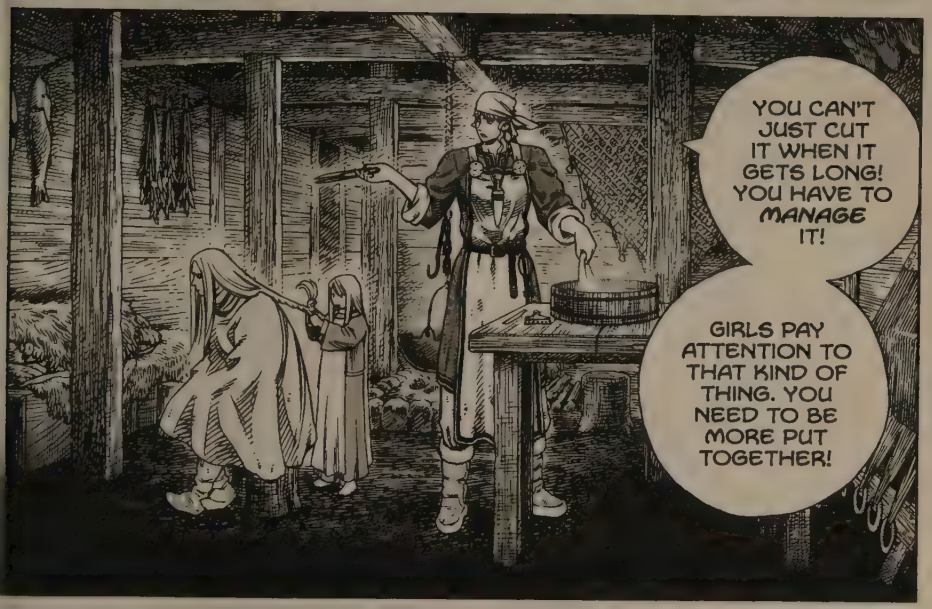
HE OFTEN COMPLAINS ABOUT NOT HAVING AN HEIR TO THE FISHERMAN'S LINE.


SNOGGI HAPPENS TO HAVE FIVE GRAND-CHILDREN OF PROPER AGE NOW.
AND WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT, ALL FIVE ARE GIRLS!
HMM?
AHH...

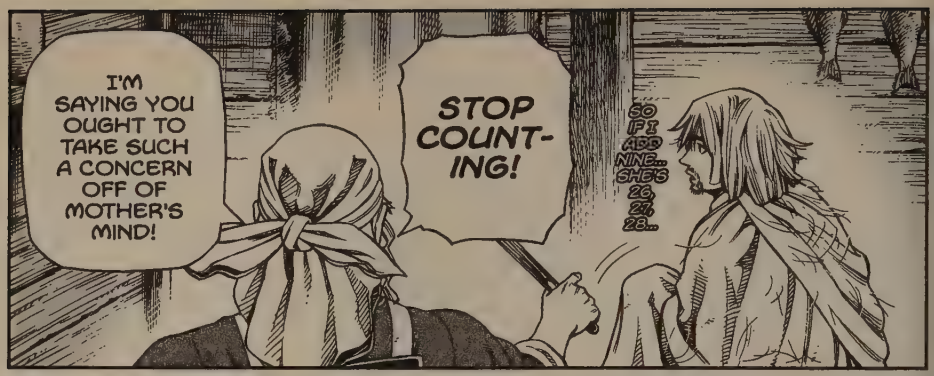
...
MARRY ?!

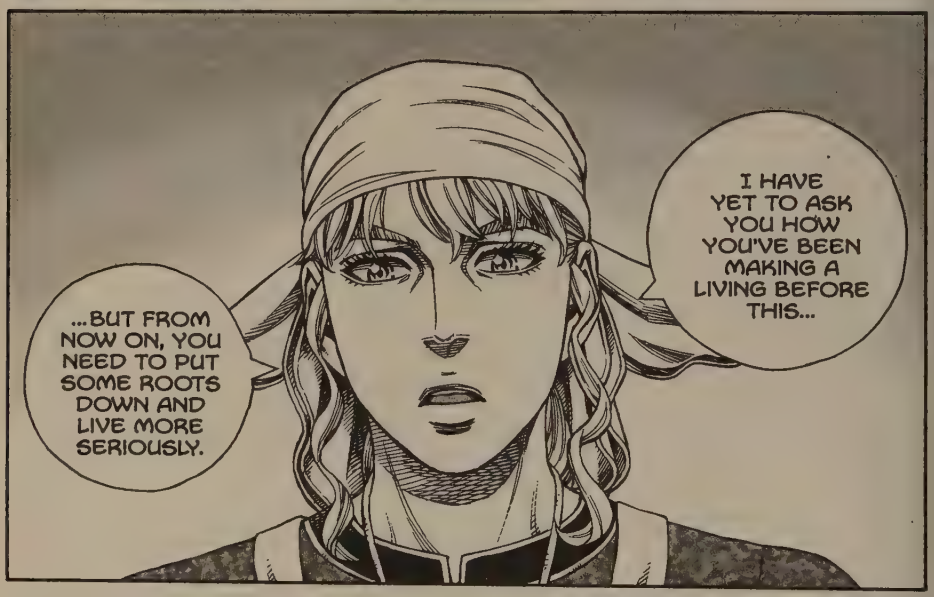
GO AND MARRY INTO THE FAMILY.
FISH-ING'S A GOOD LIFE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
?

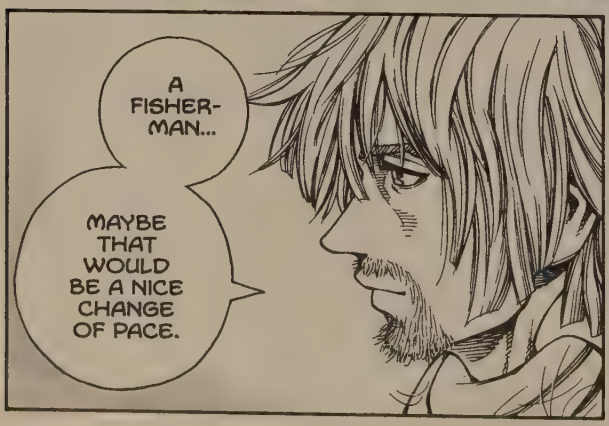
IT'S SO LONG! JUST LIKE A GIRL.
AND I SHAVE EVERY NOW AND THEN...
I DON'T NEED A HAIR-CUT...


YOU CAN'T JUST CUT IT WHEN IT GETS LONG! YOU HAVE TO *MANAGE* IT!
GIRLS PAY ATTENTION TO THAT KIND OF THING. YOU NEED TO BE MORE PUT TOGETHER!

WHAT ?!
NO! I'M TOO OLD TO BE CLEAN-SHAVEN. IT'S EMBARRASS-ING!
ON TOP OF THAT... THE BEARD DOESN'T SUIT YOU.
WHY DON'T YOU SHAVE IT ALL OFF?


I'M SAYING YOU OUGHT TO TAKE SUCH A CONCERN OFF OF MOTHER'S MIND!
STOP COUNT-ING!
SO IF I ASK NINE... SHE'S 26, 27, 28...


...BUT FROM NOW ON, YOU NEED TO PUT SOME ROOTS DOWN AND LIVE MORE SERIOUSLY.
I HAVE YET TO ASK YOU HOW YOU'VE BEEN MAKING A LIVING BEFORE THIS...


A FISHER-MAN...
MAYBE THAT WOULD BE A NICE CHANGE OF PACE.

YOU'RE WELL PAST THE AGE TO HAVE SETTLED DOWN BY NOW, THORFINN!

IN FACT, IT MIGHT ALREADY BE TOO LATE.

WHY DID YOUR VOICE GET SO HIGH-PITCHED?

I SEE. HENCE THE SUDDEN HAIRCUT...

I NEVER EVEN THOUGHT OF IT...

SHOCK-ING...

WHOA...

...17.

HOW OLD ARE YOU?

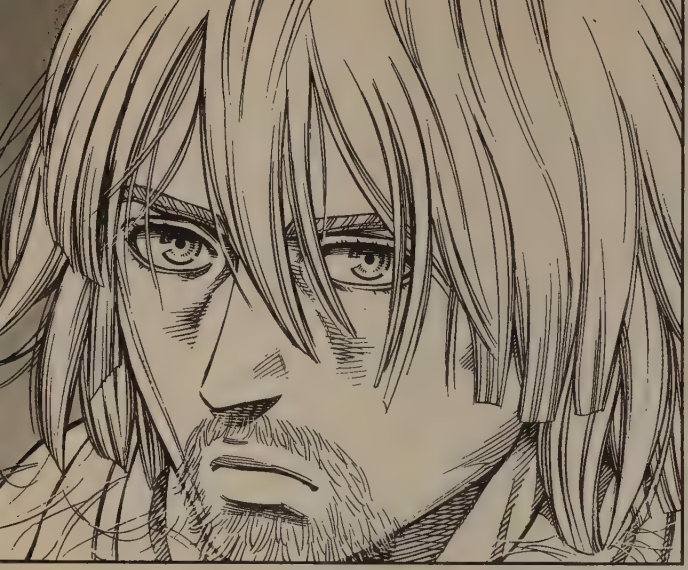
YOU WERE BORN IN THE WINTER, SO YOUR TWENTY-THIRD IS FAST APPROACH-ING.

BUT *YOU* ARE 22.

WHEN YOU SAY "WELL PAST THE AGE"... HOW OLD AM I, ANY-WAY?

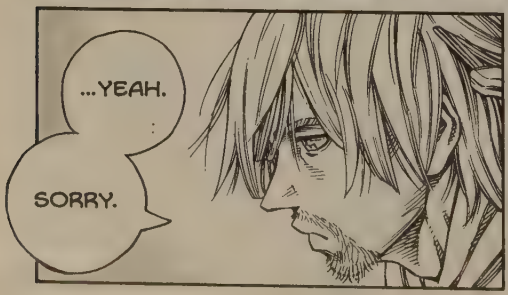
YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT!

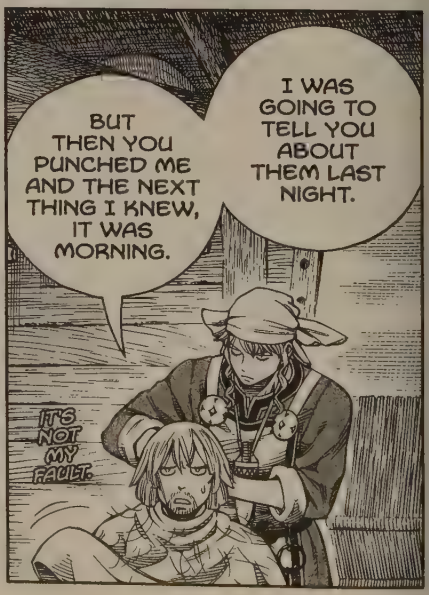
WE'RE NINE YEARS APART, RIGHT?



YOU COULD HAVE TOLD ME YOU ALREADY HAD PLANS.
WELL, SHEESH.
...

ARE YOU GOING FAR AWAY?


...YEAH.
SORRY.


I WAS GOING TO TELL YOU ABOUT THEM LAST NIGHT.
BUT THEN YOU PUNCHED ME AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW, IT WAS MORNING.
IT'S NOT MY FAULT.

GET MARRIED ON THIS ISLAND.

HAVE CHILDREN.

CATCH FISH EVERY-DAY.

GROW OLD...

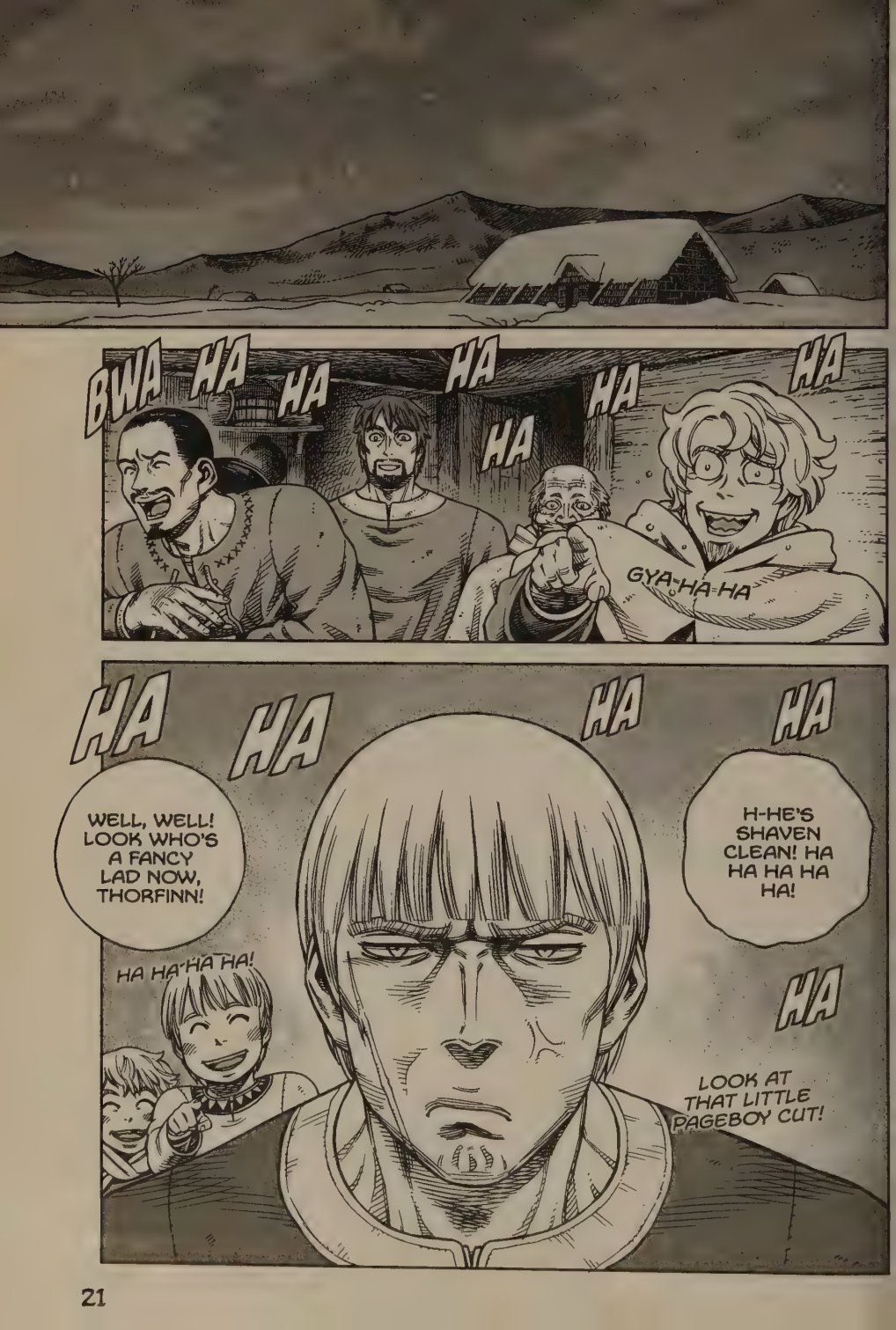
BUT...

...I HAVE TO GO.

I'LL EXPLAIN IT ALL WHEN EVERYONE'S TOGETHER TONIGHT.

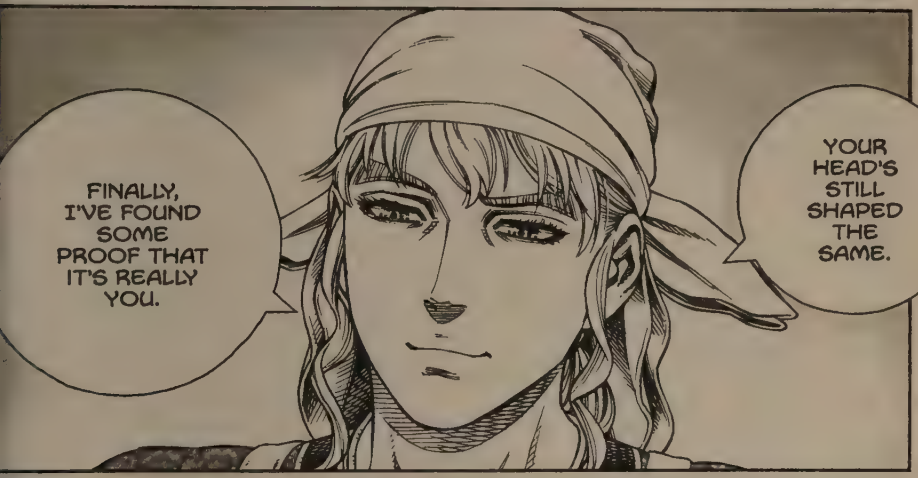
WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING...

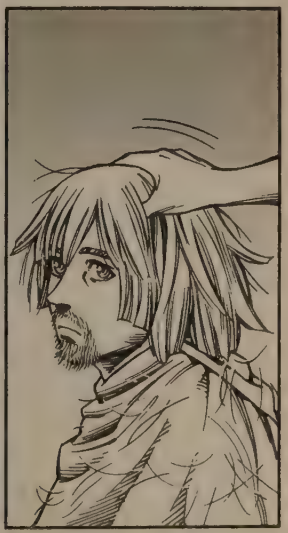
...AND WHAT I'LL DO NEXT.

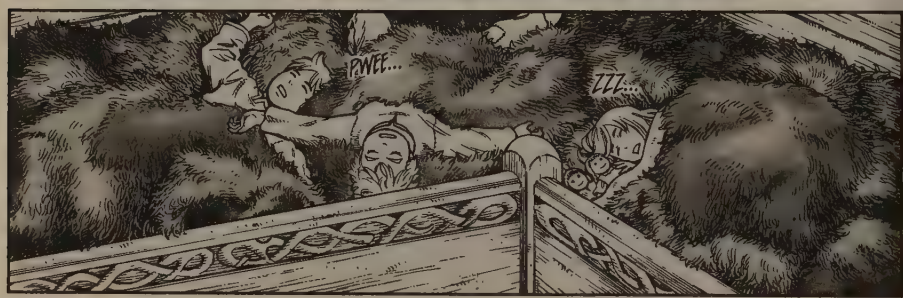

BWA HA HA HA HA HA HA
GYA-HA-HA
HA HA HA HA
WELL, WELL! LOOK WHO'S A FANCY LAD NOW, THORFINN!
H-HE'S SHAVEN CLEAN! HA HA HA HA HA!
HA HA-HA HA!
HA
LOOK AT THAT LITTLE PAGEBOY CUT!

RUB
RUB
WH-WHAT?
HEH HEH HEH HEH!

HEH


FINALLY, I'VE FOUND SOME PROOF THAT IT'S REALLY YOU.
YOUR HEAD'S STILL SHAPED THE SAME.

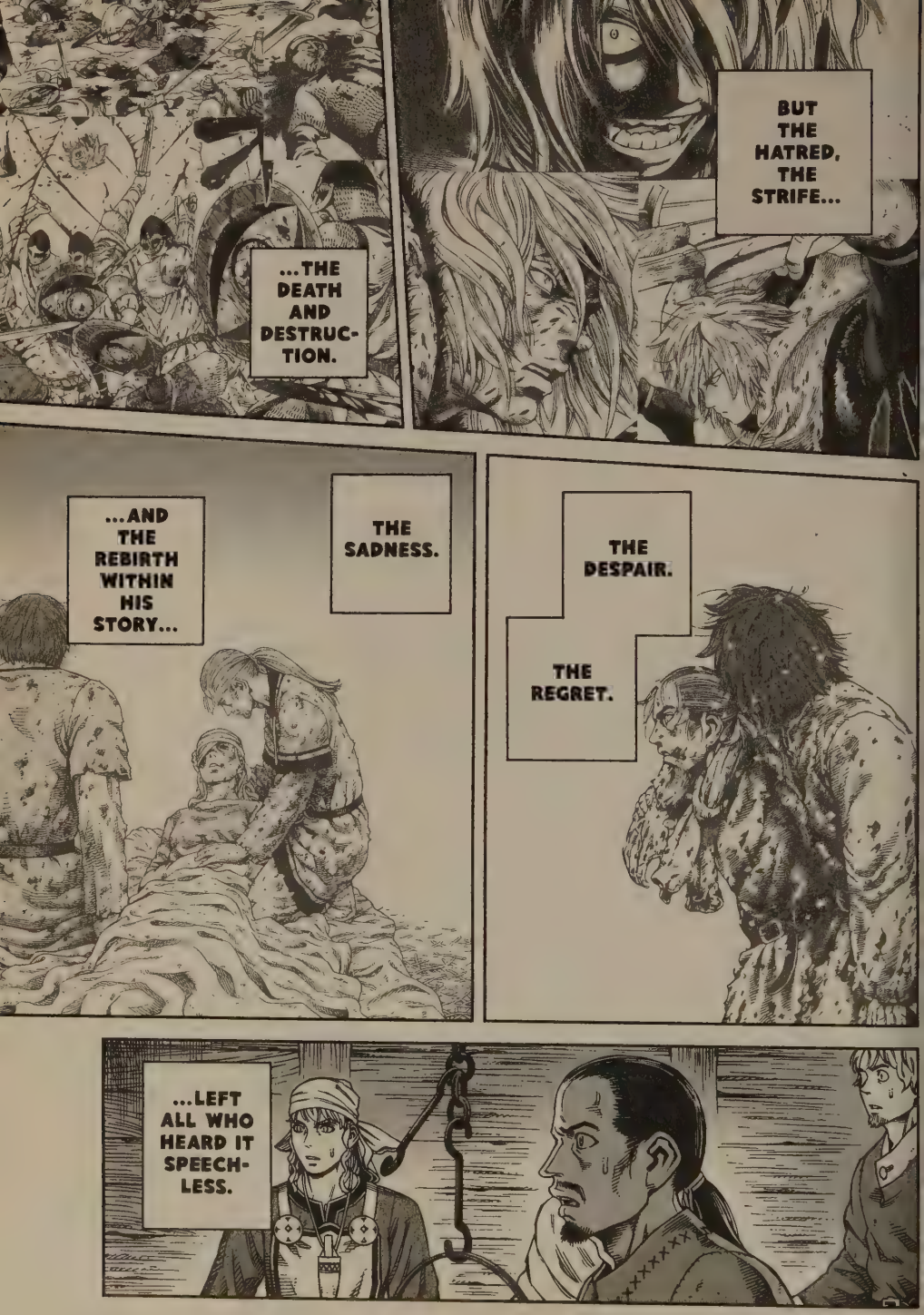


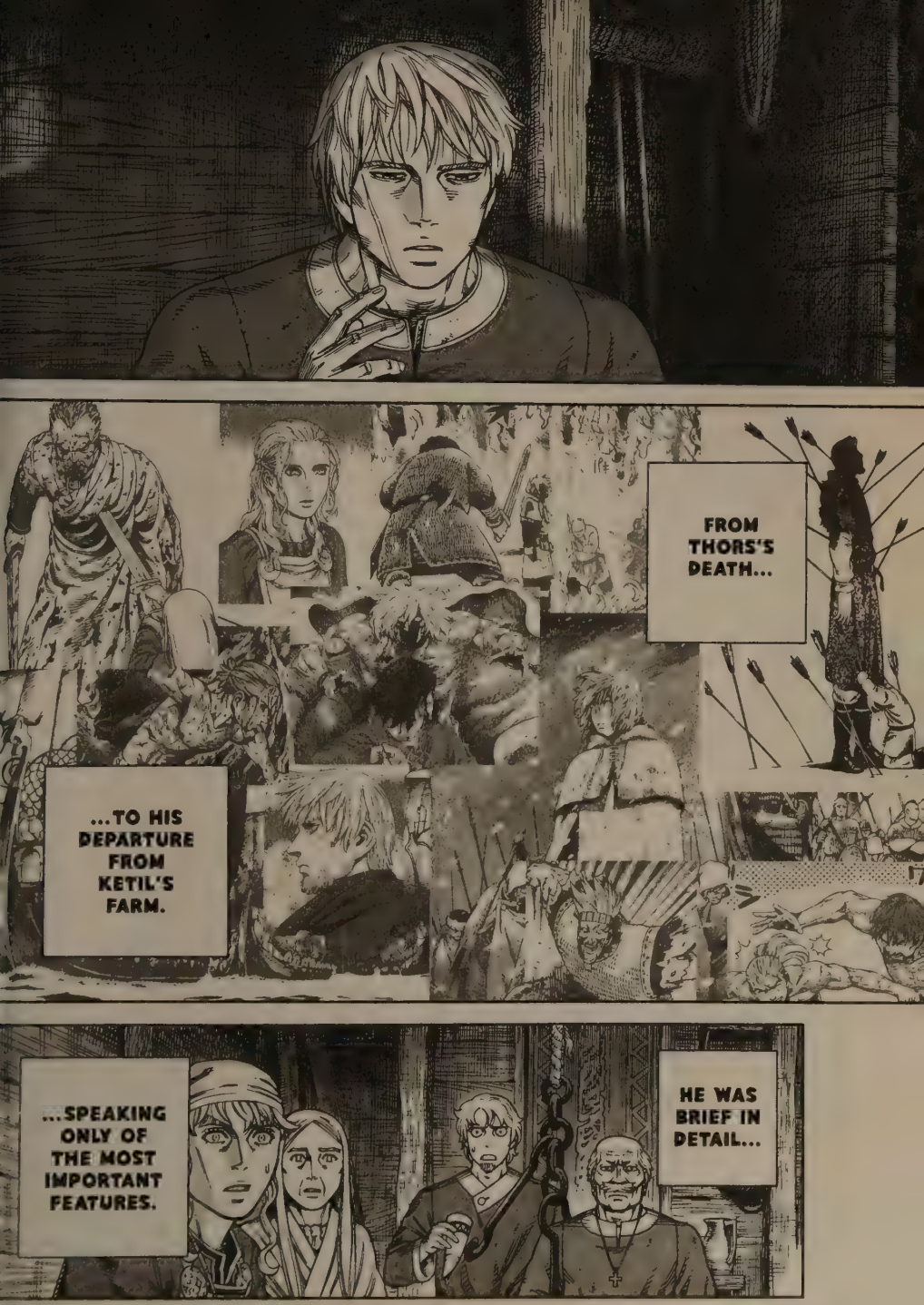


THAT NIGHT...

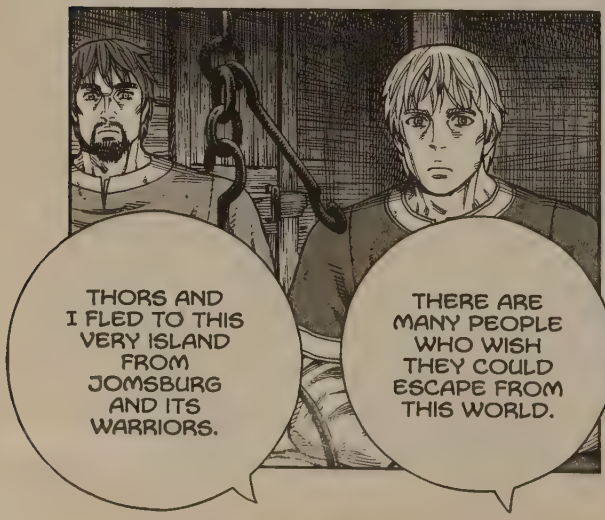
...THORFINN TOLD HIS FAMILY ABOUT THE EVENTS HE HAD EXPERIENCED OVER THE LAST SIXTEEN YEARS.

IS THAT REALLY SO BAD?
YOU DO LOOK MORE FRIENDLY NOW.
I *TOLD* HER NOT TO SHAVE ME.
BUT SHE GOT ME WHILE I WAS NODDING OFF...
YOU DON'T LOOK TOUGH AT ALL NOW.
DON'T TRY TO CONSOLE ME, EINAR.
NO, WHAT I MEAN IS...
WHAT'S UP WITH MY HAIR, ANYWAY?
SCRUNCH SCRUNCH
OH... I SEE.
I GUESS THAT'S ALL RIGHT, THEN?
HMM...

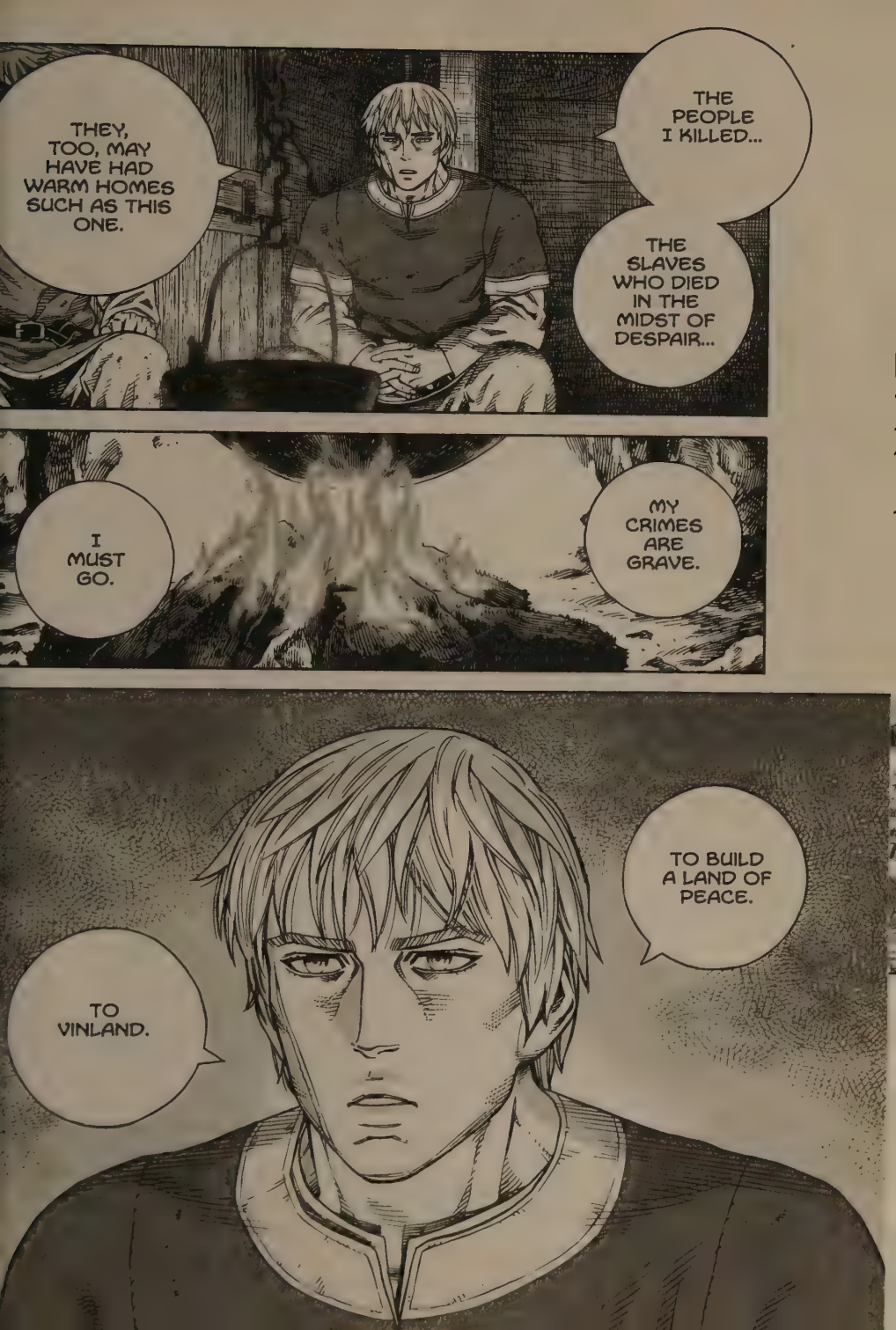

...THE DEATH AND DESTRUC-TION.
BUT THE HATRED, THE STRIFE...
...AND THE REBIRTH WITHIN HIS STORY...
THE SADNESS.
THE DESPAIR.
THE REGRET.
...LEFT ALL WHO HEARD IT SPEECH-LESS.


FROM THORS'S DEATH...
...TO HIS DEPARTURE FROM KETIL'S FARM.
HE WAS BRIEF IN DETAIL...
...SPEAKING ONLY OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FEATURES.

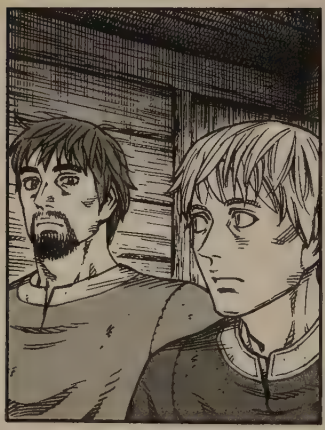
...THORFINN, SON OF THORS.
DO AS YOU MUST...

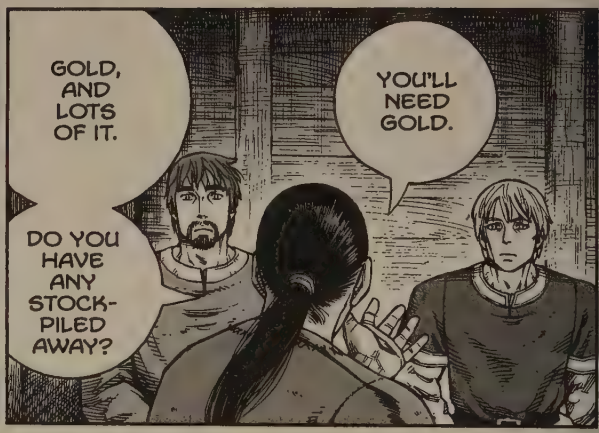

THORS AND I FLED TO THIS VERY ISLAND FROM JOMSBURG AND ITS WARRIORS.
THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO WISH THEY COULD ESCAPE FROM THIS WORLD.

BUT, MOTHER...

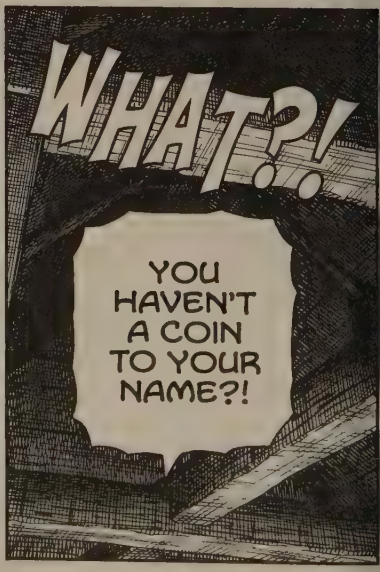

THEY, TOO, MAY HAVE HAD WARM HOMES SUCH AS THIS ONE.
THE PEOPLE I KILLED...
THE SLAVES WHO DIED IN THE MIDST OF DESPAIR...
I MUST GO.
MY CRIMES ARE GRAVE.
TO VINLAND.
TO BUILD A LAND OF PEACE.

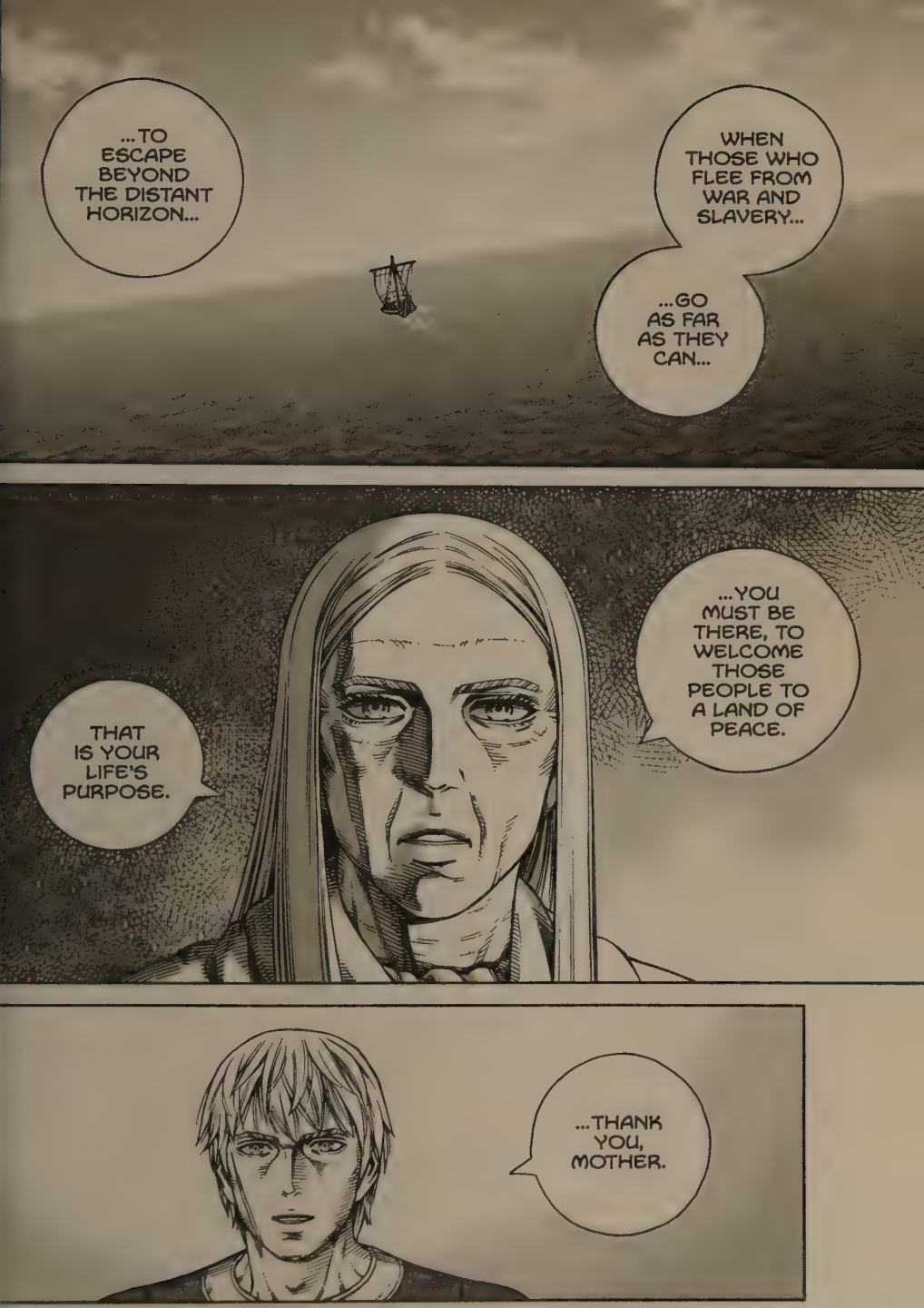
IT'LL BE QUITE THE COMMIT-MENT...
BUT... STILL...
CREATING A COUNTRY IN VINLAND...?

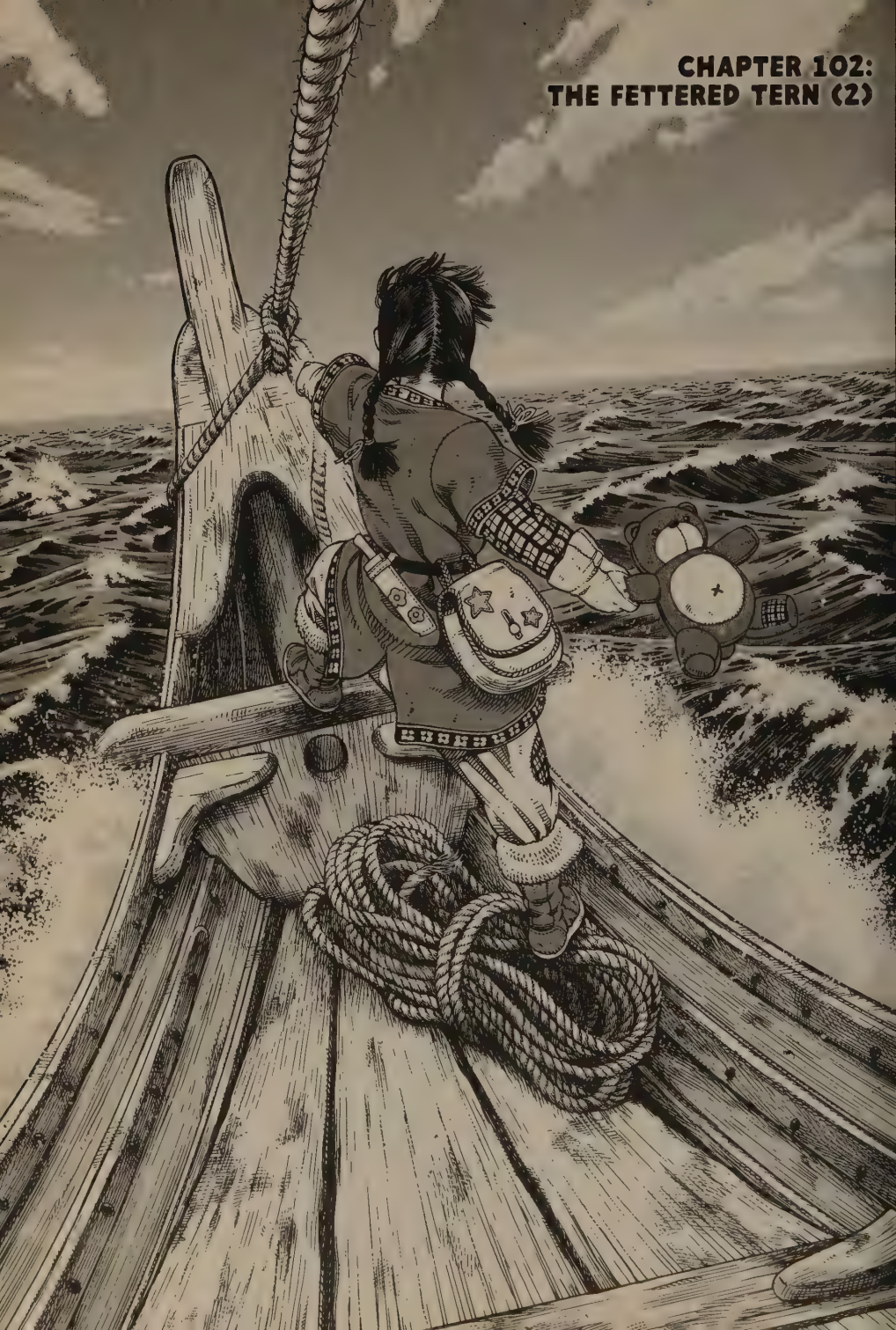



GOLD, AND LOTS OF IT.
YOU'LL NEED GOLD.
DO YOU HAVE ANY STOCK-PILED AWAY?

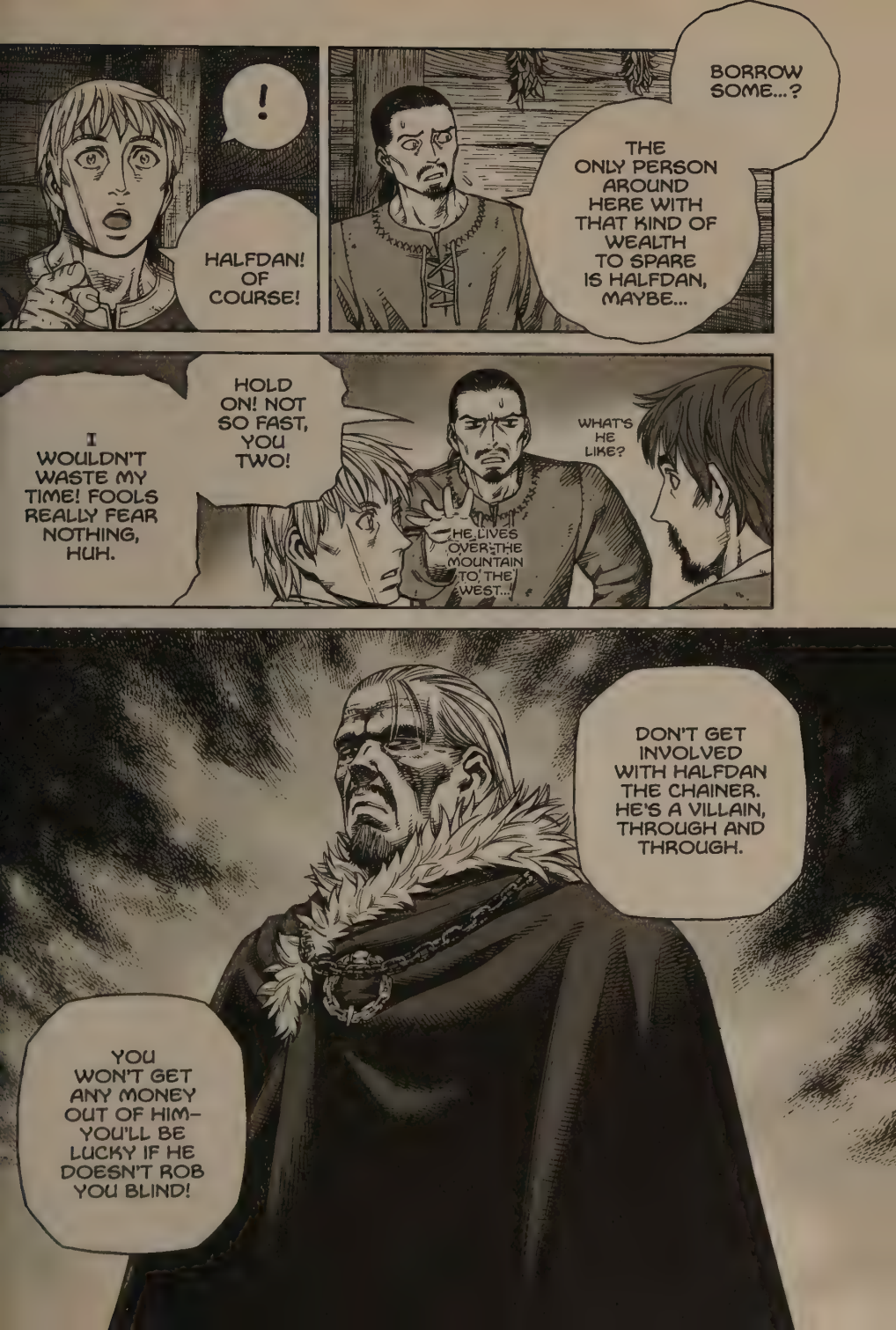
YES. I NEED TO BORROW SOME.
I RETURNED TO ICELAND IN PART TO LOOK FOR SPONSORS.


WHAT?!
YOU HAVEN'T A COIN TO YOUR NAME?!


...TO ESCAPE BEYOND THE DISTANT HORIZON...
WHEN THOSE WHO FLEE FROM WAR AND SLAVERY...
...GO AS FAR AS THEY CAN...
THAT IS YOUR LIFE'S PURPOSE.
...YOU MUST BE THERE, TO WELCOME THOSE PEOPLE TO A LAND OF PEACE.
...THANK YOU, MOTHER.



CHAPTER 102: THE FETTERED TERN (2)


!
HALFDAN! OF COURSE!
BORROW SOME...?
THE ONLY PERSON AROUND HERE WITH THAT KIND OF WEALTH TO SPARE IS HALFDAN, MAYBE...
I WOULDN'T WASTE MY TIME! FOOLS REALLY FEAR NOTHING, HUH.
HOLD ON! NOT SO FAST, YOU TWO!
HE LIVES OVER THE MOUNTAIN TO THE WEST...!
WHAT'S HE LIKE?
DON'T GET INVOLVED WITH HALFDAN THE CHAINER. HE'S A VILLAIN, THROUGH AND THROUGH.
YOU WON'T GET ANY MONEY OUT OF HIM– YOU'LL BE LUCKY IF HE DOESN'T ROB YOU BLIND!

HUH? WHERE IN THE–?

THERE! BENEATH THE FRONT HULL!

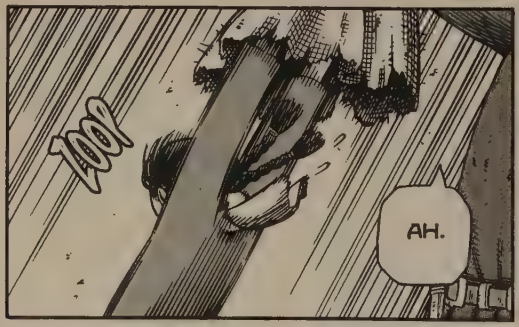
RAHH!

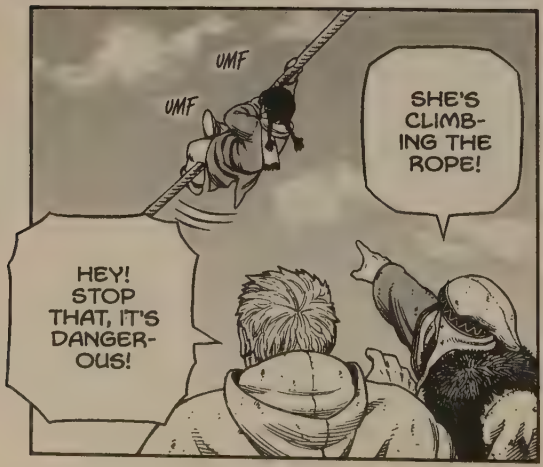
THUMP THUMP

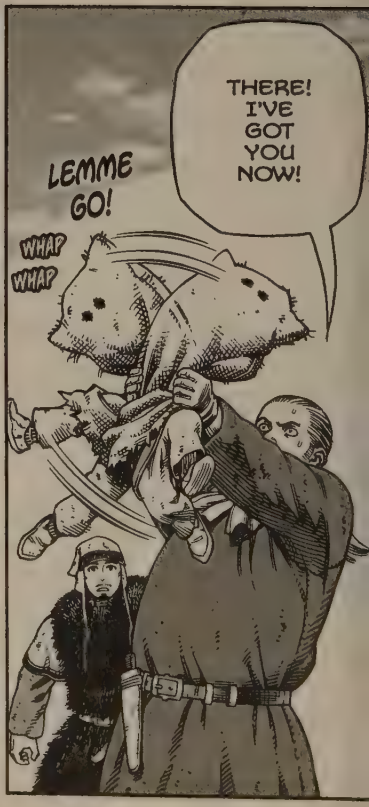
AAAGH!

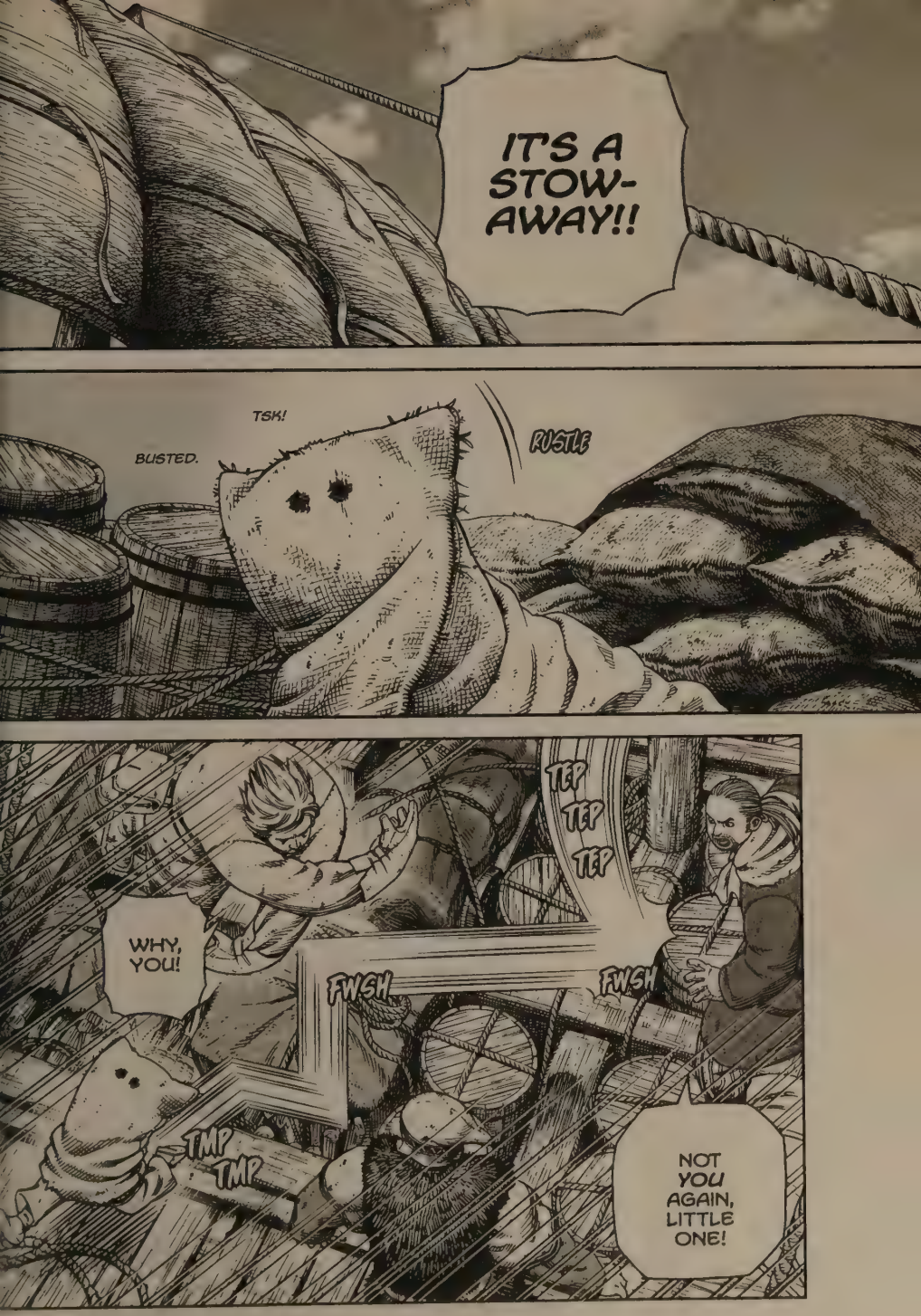
OVER THAT WAY!

GIVE IT UP, YOU! THERE'S NO ESCAPE OUT HERE!

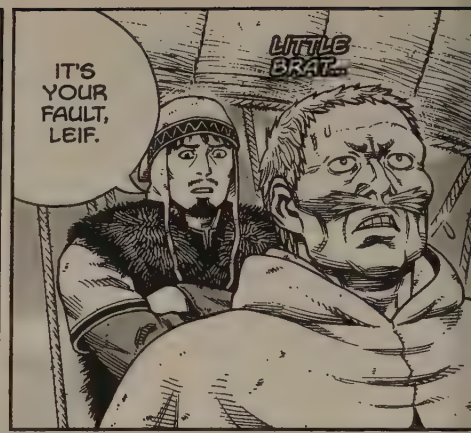


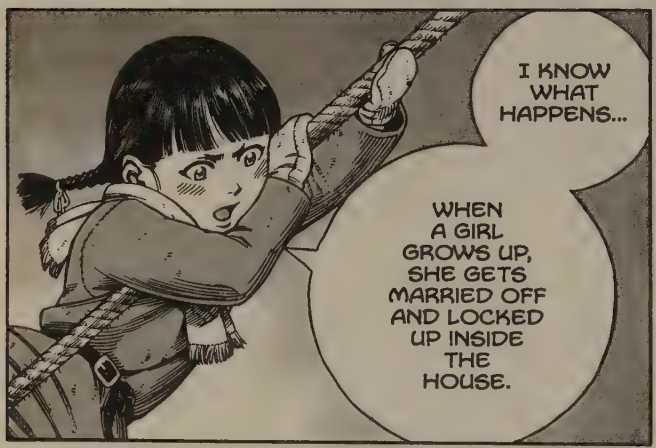





IT'S A STOW-AWAY!!
TSK!
BUSTED.
RUSTLE
TEP TEP TEP
WHY, YOU!
FWSH
FWSH
TMP TMP
NOT YOU AGAIN, LITTLE ONE!

WHOAAA...
SWAY
YOU CAN'T BLAME A CHILD FOR BECOMING CURIOUS.
YOU ALWAYS SPEAK FREELY ABOUT YOUR TRAVELS TO VINLAND AND OTHER DISTANT PLACES IN EVERY VILLAGE YOU VISIT.


IT'S YOUR FAULT, LEIF.
LITTLE BRAT...


I KNOW WHAT HAPPENS...
WHEN A GIRL GROWS UP, SHE GETS MARRIED OFF AND LOCKED UP INSIDE THE HOUSE.

...
OH, SO IT'S MY FAULT, IS IT?

MOM TOLD ME...
"RIDING ON A SHIP IS A MAN'S JOB."
"AND PROTECTING THE HOME IS A PROPER WOMAN'S JOB."

YOU PROMISED YOU WOULD TAKE ME OUT OF THE COUNTRY!!

LEIF, YOU LIAR!

NO, NOT AT ALL!

SHE'S GOT IT ALL MIXED UP.

YOU MADE HER A PROMISE, LEIF?

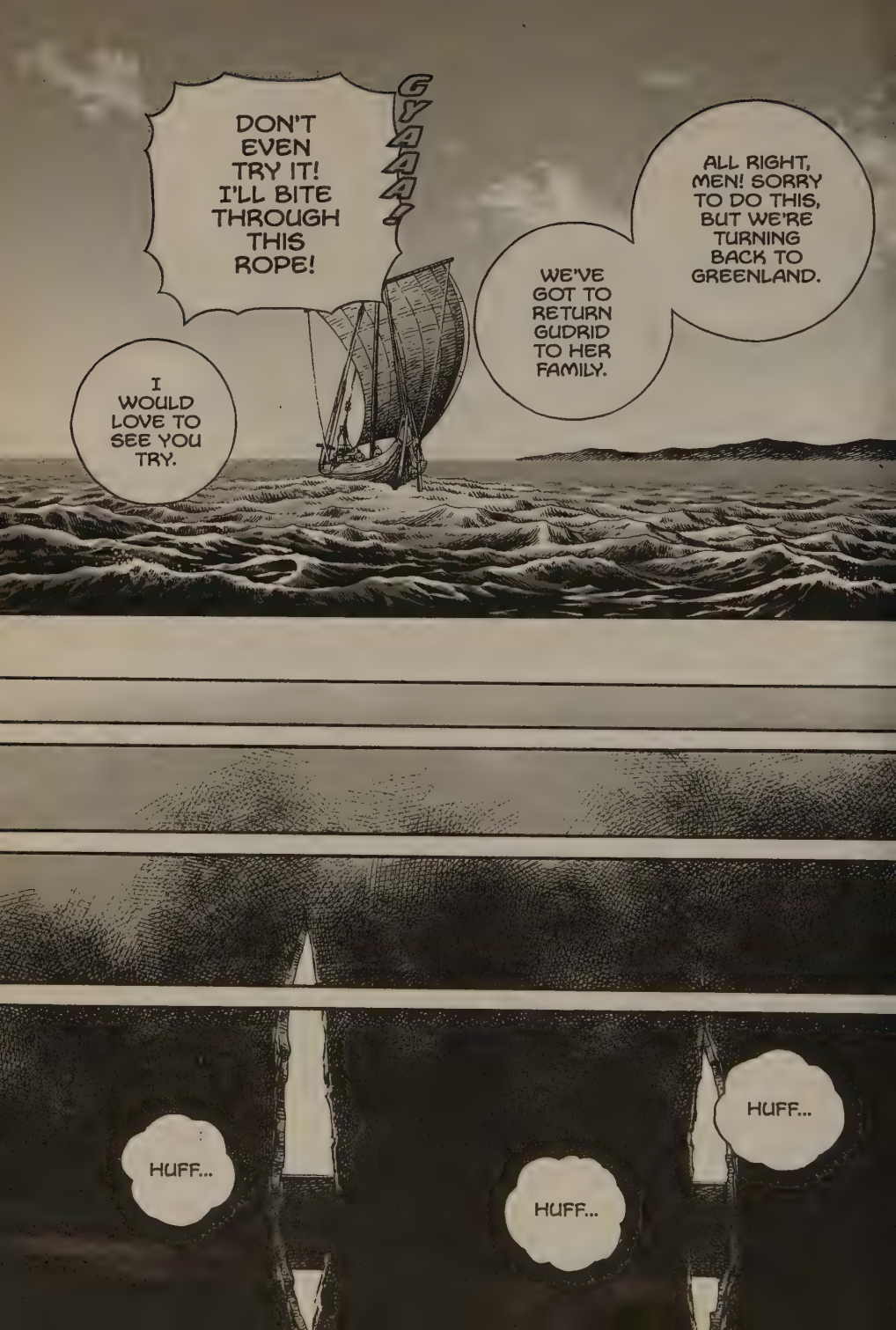
IT HAS TO BE NOW, OR THERE'S NO POINT!

JUST 'CAUSE I'M A KID!

DON'T LIE TO ME!

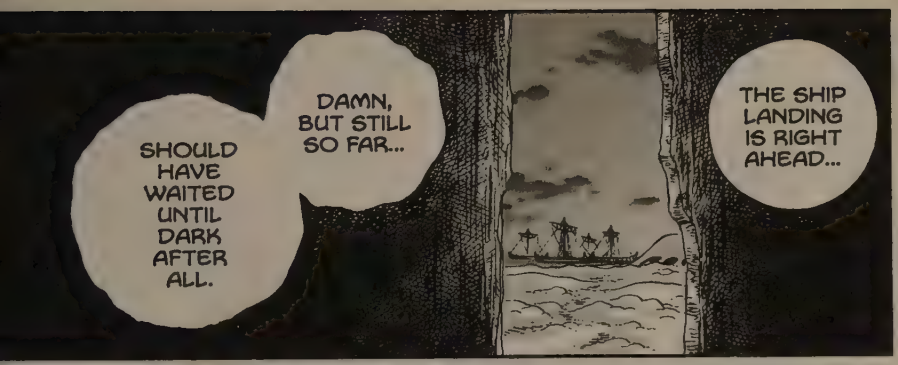
ONCE YOU'RE AN ADULT, I CAN TAKE YOU ANYWH–

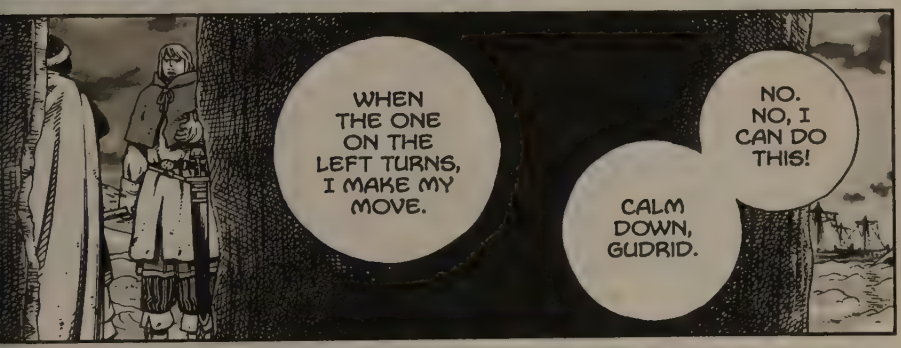
GUDRID! I TOLD YOU I'D DO THAT "WHEN YOU GREW UP"!

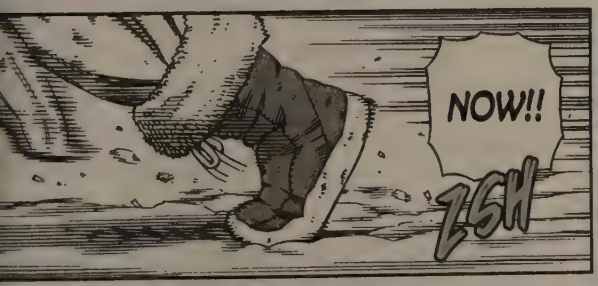

DON'T EVEN TRY IT! I'LL BITE THROUGH THIS ROPE!
GYAAA!
I WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU TRY.
WE'VE GOT TO RETURN GUDRID TO HER FAMILY.
ALL RIGHT, MEN! SORRY TO DO THIS, BUT WE'RE TURNING BACK TO GREENLAND.
HUFF...
HUFF...
HUFF...

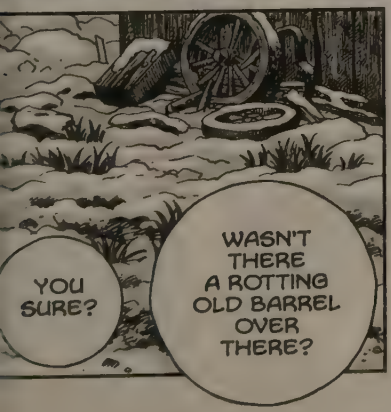
I SAID I DON'T LIKE THAT MEN HAVE TO BE ON A SHIP AND WOMEN HAVE TO BE IN THE HOUSE!
I DIDN'T SAY IT WAS BAD!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT? IT'S A VERY IMPORTANT JOB, INDEED.
I WANT TO RIDE ON A SHIP!
WHO MADE THAT UP? WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE THAT WAY?
GRRR!
KIDS LIKE THAT WON'T GIVE IN TO REASON.
SHE'LL CHANGE HER MIND WHEN SHE GETS OLDER.
...
I KNOW YOU FEEL FOR HER, POPS, BUT DON'T LISTEN.

ICELAND
HALFDAN'S FARM
DECEMBER 1018
...IS GONE?!
GUDRID...
THAT'S NOT ACCEPTABLE, YOU FOOLS. FIND HER!!
YOU'LL ALL BECOME FEED FOR THE FISH IF YOU DON'T FIND HER BEFORE DARK!!


SHOULD HAVE WAITED UNTIL DARK AFTER ALL.
DAMN, BUT STILL SO FAR...
THE SHIP LANDING IS RIGHT AHEAD...


WHEN THE ONE ON THE LEFT TURNS, I MAKE MY MOVE.
CALM DOWN, GUDRID.
NO. NO, I CAN DO THIS!


NOW!!
ZSH

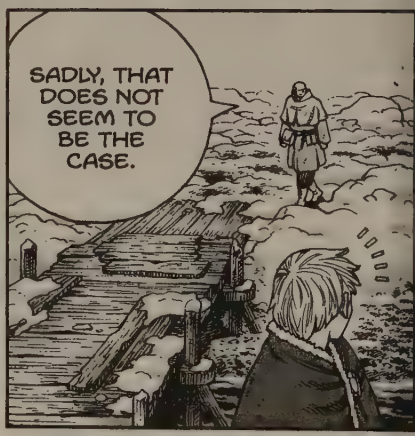

YOU SURE?
WASN'T THERE A ROTTING OLD BARREL OVER THERE?

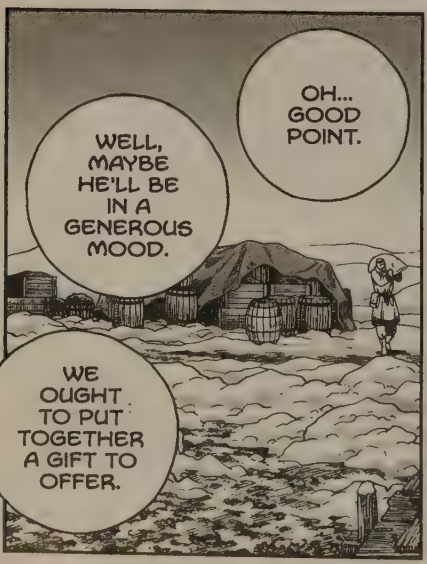
HMM?

!

MY HOPES ARE HIGH.
HE MUST BE RICH TO HAVE SO MANY.
THESE SHIPS ALL BELONG TO HALFDAN?

I JUST GOT THE STORY.
HALFDAN'S SON IS SOON TO BE MARRIED.
THESE ARE THE SHIPS OF THE WEDDING GUESTS.

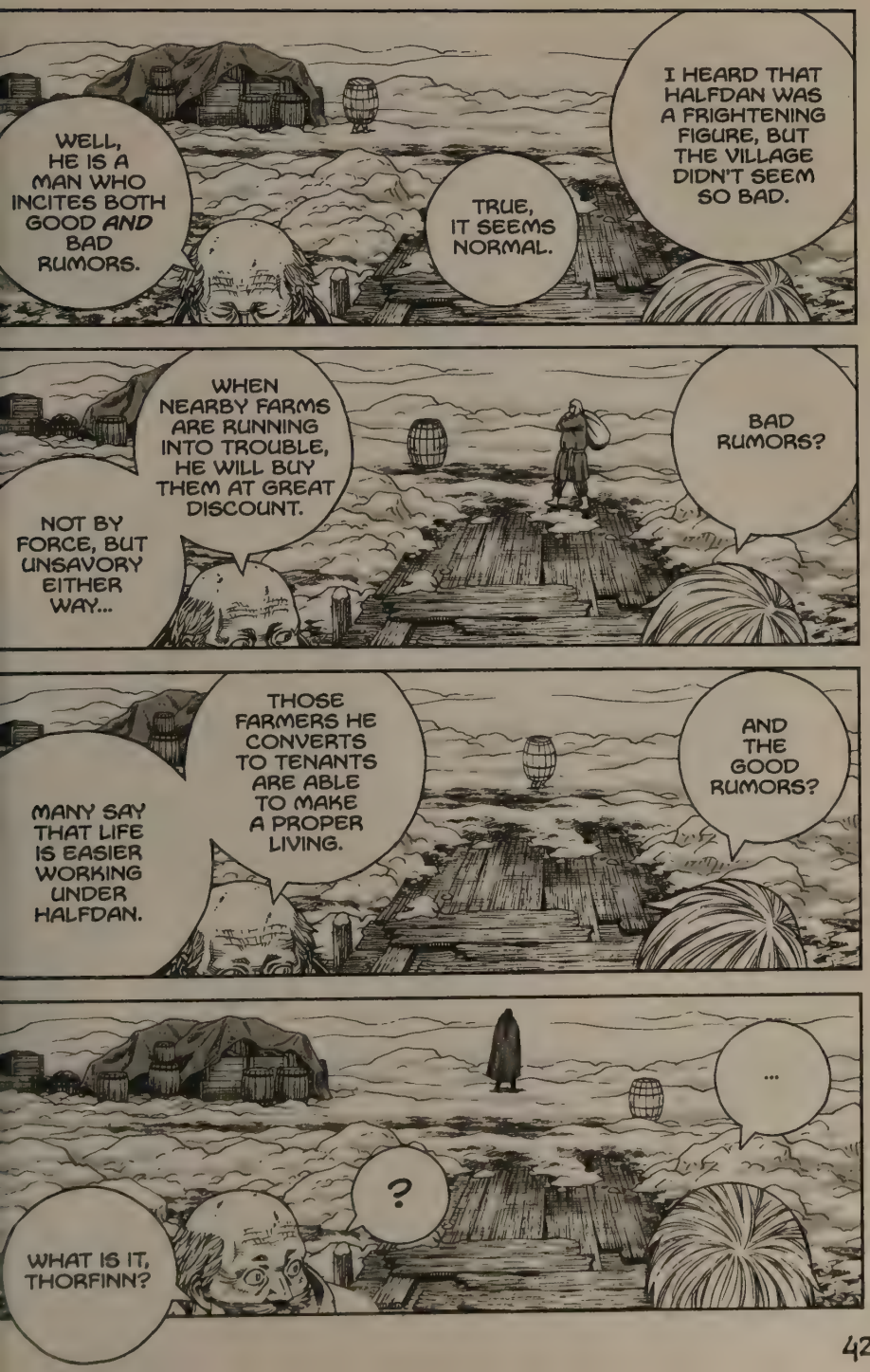

SADLY, THAT DOES NOT SEEM TO BE THE CASE.


OH... GOOD POINT.
WELL, MAYBE HE'LL BE IN A GENEROUS MOOD.
WE OUGHT TO PUT TOGETHER A GIFT TO OFFER.

AH! A HAPPY DAY, THEN!
HOW DOES A WEDDING ...
...FIT INTO OUR PLAN TO ASK TO BORROW MONEY?

HALFDAN'S FARM DOCK
HOH!
ZLOOP
WHOA!
WOW, LOOK AT ALL THE SHIPS.
BE CAREFUL, THE WOOD IS FROZEN IN PLACES.

WAS JUST WONDER-ING.
IT'S BEEN... WALKING AROUND.
THAT BARREL...
...!
PLEASE, GOOD SIR, LET ME GO! IT'S JUST A TRICK OF THE MIND!
IT WAS ALL GOING SO WELL, I GOT CARRIED AWAY AND MOVED TOO QUICK...
HE'S POINTING A FINGER RIGHT AT ME!!
I'VE BEEN SPOTTED!!
HOP
AAAAH-HHH!!
ACK
NOTHING BUT...

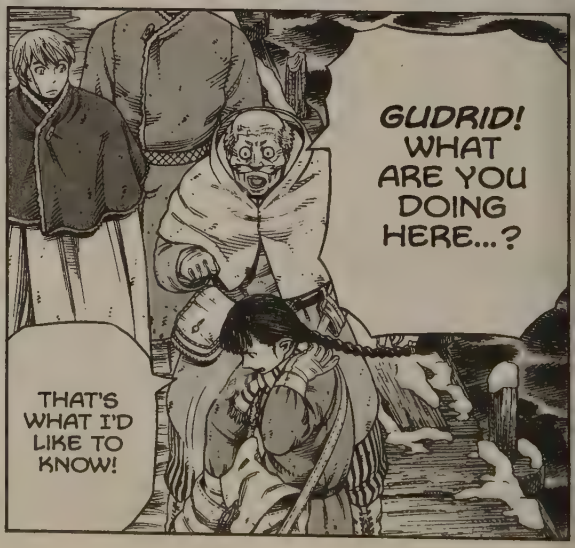

I HEARD THAT HALFDAN WAS A FRIGHTENING FIGURE, BUT THE VILLAGE DIDN'T SEEM SO BAD.
TRUE, IT SEEMS NORMAL.
WELL, HE IS A MAN WHO INCITES BOTH GOOD *AND* BAD RUMORS.
BAD RUMORS?
WHEN NEARBY FARMS ARE RUNNING INTO TROUBLE, HE WILL BUY THEM AT GREAT DISCOUNT.
NOT BY FORCE, BUT UNSAVORY EITHER WAY...
AND THE GOOD RUMORS?
THOSE FARMERS HE CONVERTS TO TENANTS ARE ABLE TO MAKE A PROPER LIVING.
MANY SAY THAT LIFE IS EASIER WORKING UNDER HALFDAN.
...
?
WHAT IS IT, THORFINN?

PAT

PAT

SO HIDE ME ON YOUR SHIP.

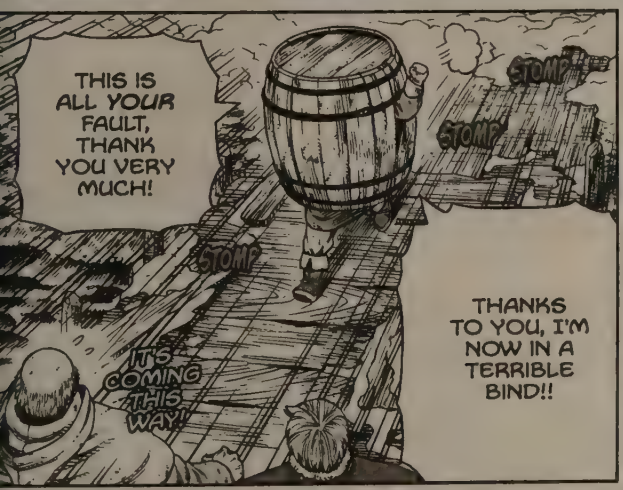
AT ANY RATE, THERE'S A BAD MAN AFTER ME.

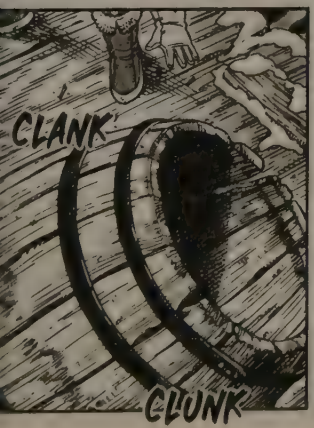


GUDRID! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE...?

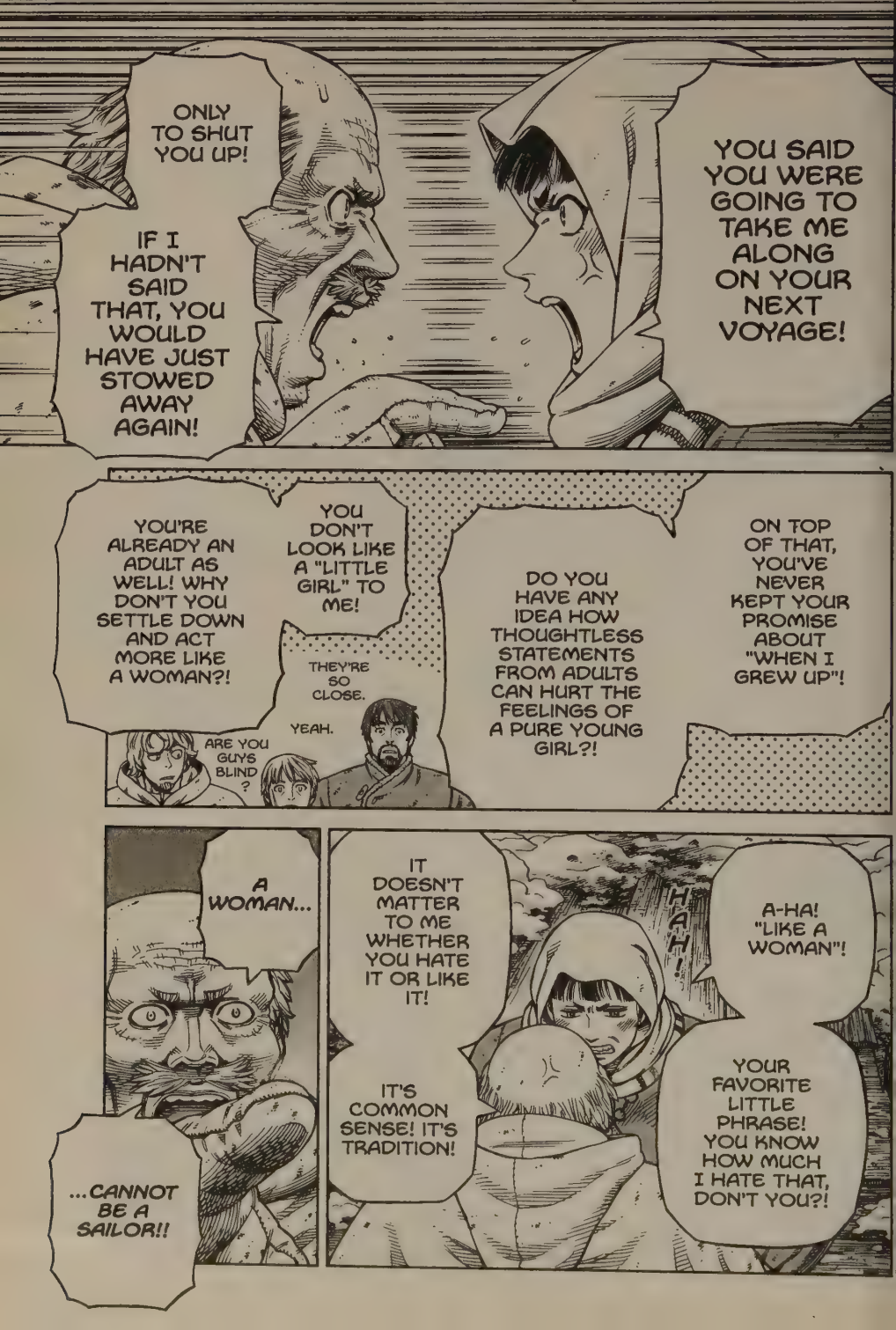
THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO KNOW!

LEIF, SON OF ERIC!! HOW DARE YOU LEAVE ME BEHIND!!
LEIF!!


THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
IT'S COMING THIS WAY!
THANKS TO YOU, I'M NOW IN A TERRIBLE BIND!!

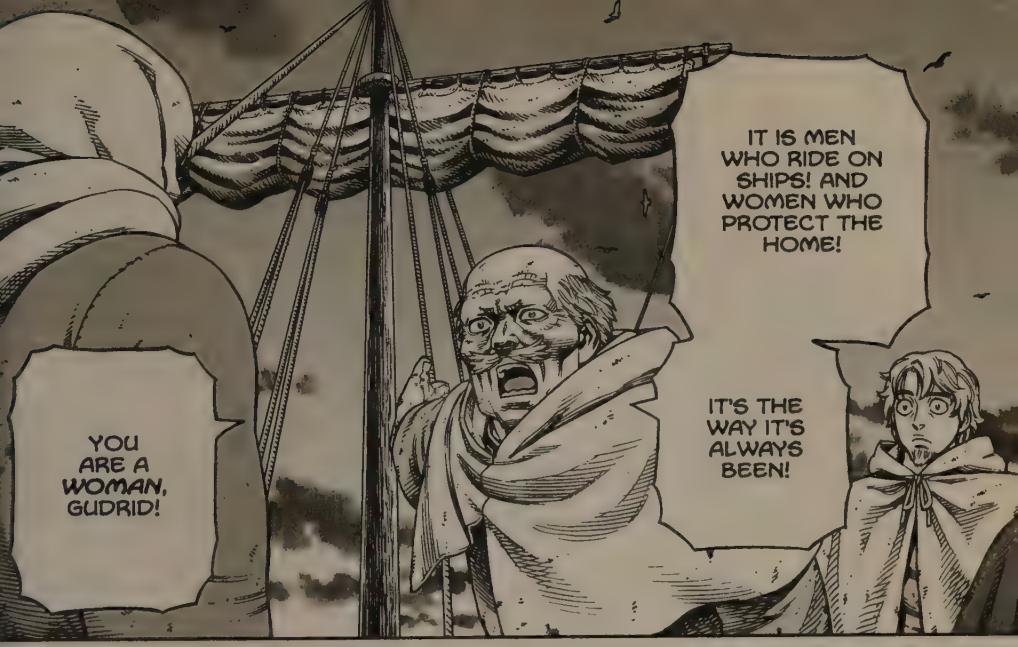

CLANK
CLUNK

OH.
I'M AFRAID I DON'T KNOW ANY BARRELS.
YOU'LL NEED TO SHOW ME YOUR FACE.

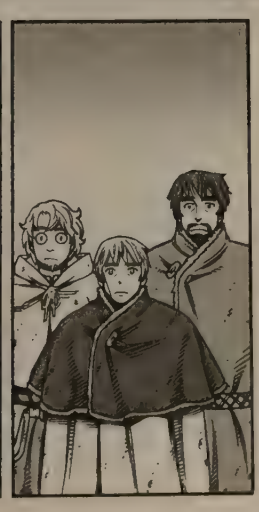

ONLY TO SHUT YOU UP!
IF I HADN'T SAID THAT, YOU WOULD HAVE JUST STOWED AWAY AGAIN!
YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO TAKE ME ALONG ON YOUR NEXT VOYAGE!
YOU'RE ALREADY AN ADULT AS WELL! WHY DON'T YOU SETTLE DOWN AND ACT MORE LIKE A WOMAN?!
YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE A "LITTLE GIRL" TO ME!
THEY'RE SO CLOSE.
YEAH.
ARE YOU GUYS BLIND ?
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW THOUGHTLESS STATEMENTS FROM ADULTS CAN HURT THE FEELINGS OF A PURE YOUNG GIRL?!
ON TOP OF THAT, YOU'VE NEVER KEPT YOUR PROMISE ABOUT "WHEN I GREW UP"!
A WOMAN...
...CANNOT BE A SAILOR!!
IT DOESN'T MATTER TO ME WHETHER YOU HATE IT OR LIKE IT!
IT'S COMMON SENSE! IT'S TRADITION!
HA HA!
A-HA! "LIKE A WOMAN"!
YOUR FAVORITE LITTLE PHRASE! YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I HATE THAT, DON'T YOU?!

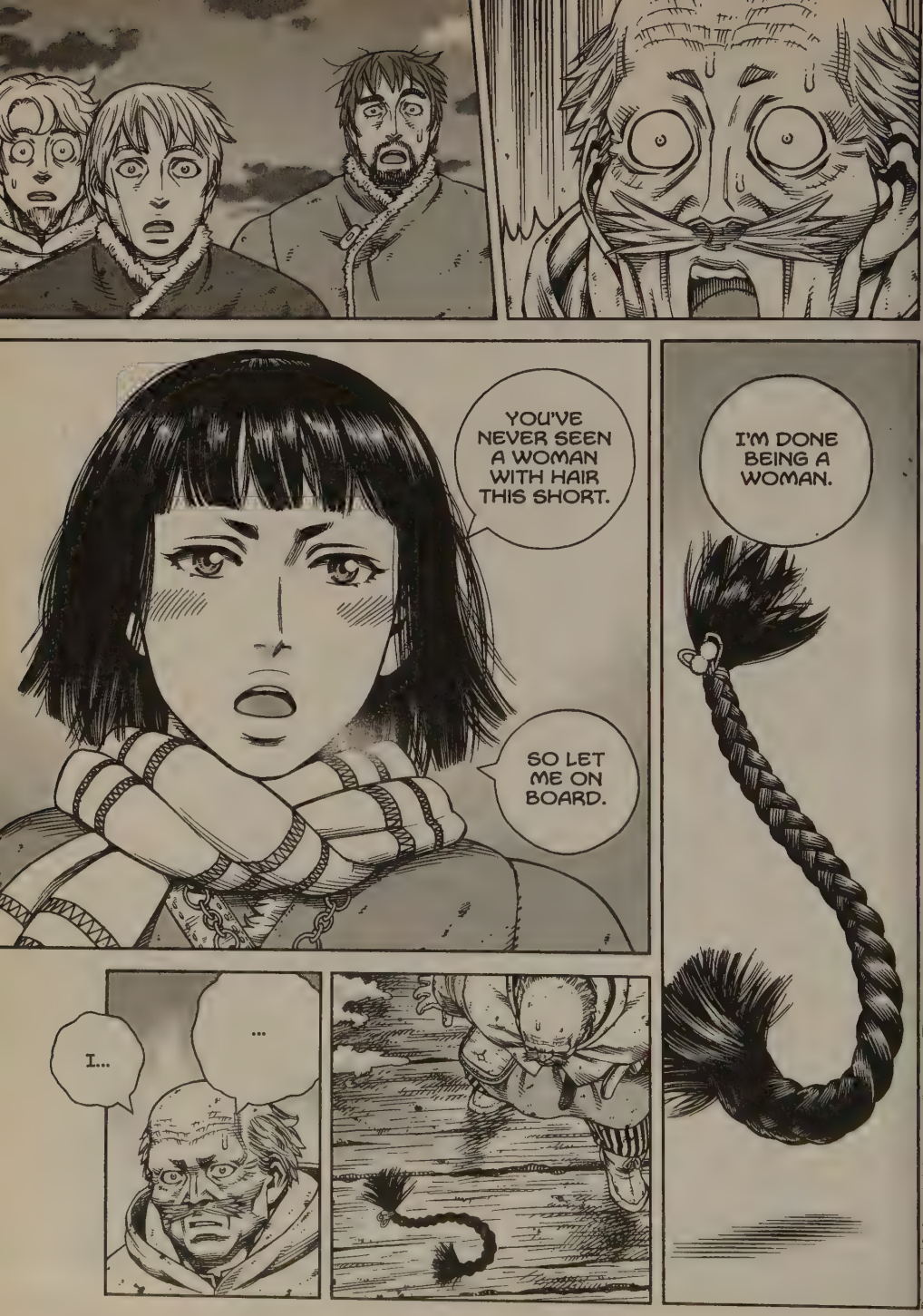
WHAT BAD MAN? EXPLAIN YOURSELF!
JUST LET ME ON FIRST.
DON'T WORRY, I'LL TELL YOU WHY ON THE SHIP.
...HUH? SISTER?
YES.
SHE'S MY BROTHER'S WIFE.
I DON'T THINK SO. EVERY TIME YOU'VE SET FOOT ON MY SHIP, I'VE HAD A DEVIL OF A TIME GETTING YOU OFF OF IT.
HOW CAN YOU BE SO COLD TO YOUR OWN SISTER BY MARRIAGE ?!
BUT... SHE'S SO YOUNG!!
IS SHE EVEN TWENTY ?!
LEEET MEEE ONNN!!!
THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT TO BEGIN WITH, LEIF!
ALL BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T LET ME RIDE WITH YOU...
H R R R G G
AS I SAID, EXPLAIN YOURSELF!

SHING
SHK
!
?!
JUST HAND IT HERE...
N-NOW CALM DOWN, GUDRID.
NO NEED FOR BLADES.
SHWIK


YOU ARE A WOMAN, GUDRID!
IT IS MEN WHO RIDE ON SHIPS! AND WOMEN WHO PROTECT THE HOME!
IT'S THE WAY IT'S ALWAYS BEEN!

MAYBE WE SHOULD STEP IN TO MEDIATE.
BUT WE DON'T REALLY KNOW THE SITUATION.




YOU'VE NEVER SEEN A WOMAN WITH HAIR THIS SHORT.
SO LET ME ON BOARD.
I'M DONE BEING A WOMAN.
I...
...

BA-
SHING!

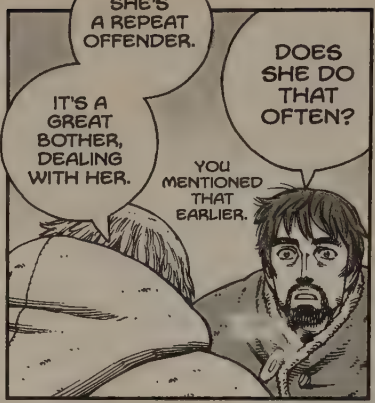
SLIIIP
...SLIP-PERY.
GONK
I TOLD HER NOT TO RUN...
LEIF, SHE'S OUT COLD!!
SHE HIT THE BACK OF HER HEAD!!
WHOA!! ARE YOU OKAY?!

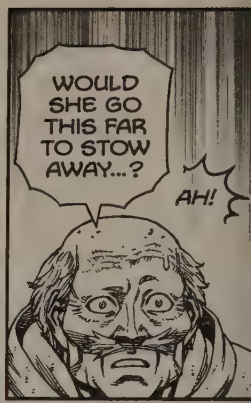
THAT WAS THE PART WHERE YOU HAVE TO LET ME ON YOUR SHIP!!
TAKE A HINT!!
COME ON!
NOT UNTIL YOU EXPLAIN.
I CAN'T.
CRAP.
OH!
YOUNG MISS!
WHERE ARE YOUUUU?
RAHH RAH
STOP, GUDRID!
THE PIER IS VERY...
LET ME HIDE IN YOUR SHIP!
LOOK, JUST EASE UP!
AH! HEY!
DASH
CRAK

CHAPTER 103: THE FETTERED TERN (3)

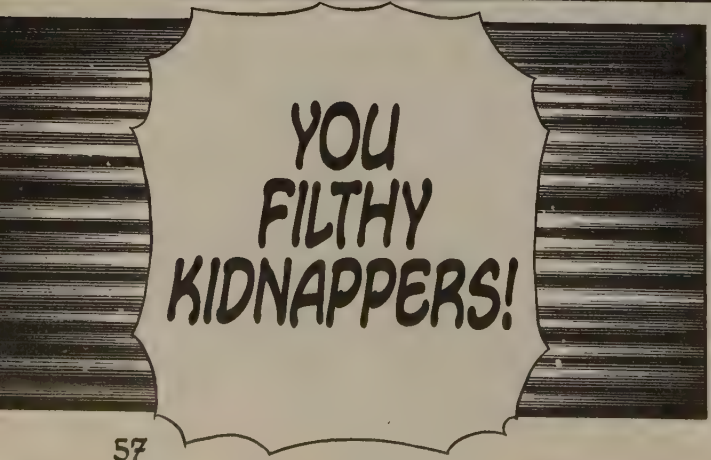
OVER THERE, SIGGY!
!
YOUNG MIIISS!
WHAT...
...ARE THEY DOING...
...TO GUDRID?

LISTEN, IT'S NO BUSINESS OF MINE, BUT YOU REALIZE...

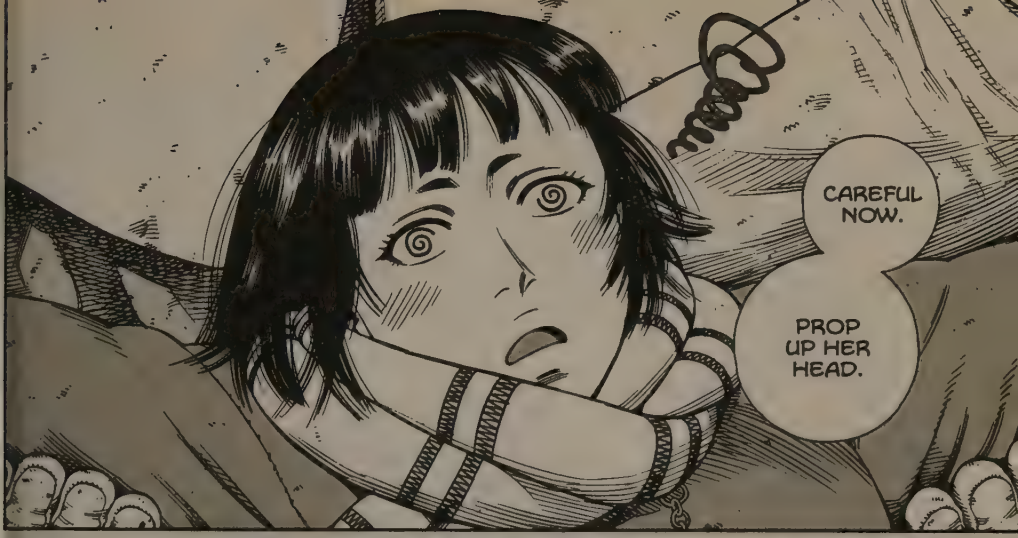

SHE'S A REPEAT OFFENDER.
IT'S A GREAT BOTHER, DEALING WITH HER.
DOES SHE DO THAT OFTEN?
YOU MENTIONED THAT EARLIER.


WOULD SHE GO THIS FAR TO STOW AWAY...?
AH!

...THIS LOOKS JUST LIKE A KID-NAPPING, RIGHT?


YOU FILTHY KIDNAPPERS!

...AH.

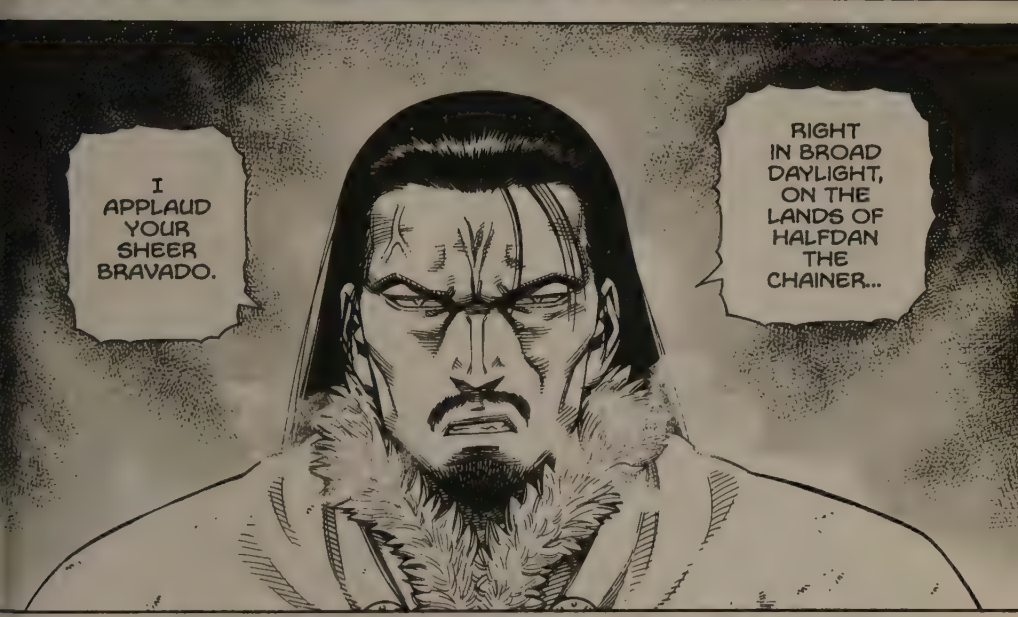

CAREFUL NOW.
PROP UP HER HEAD.

WELL, I CAN'T JUST LEAVE HER OUT ON THE DOCK, CAN I?
YOU'RE PUTTING HER ON THE SHIP, LEIF?

BUT... I WONDER WHAT WOULD BRING GUDRID HERE, TO HALFDAN'S FARM...
TOO LIVELY.
THERE WE GO.
SHE SEEMS LIVELY.

GET BACK, MISTER LEIF!!
?!
SHIVER
SHINING
THWAAM!!

WATCH OUT! FURTHER BACK!


I APPLAUD YOUR SHEER BRAVADO.
RIGHT IN BROAD DAYLIGHT, ON THE LANDS OF HALFDAN THE CHAINER...

YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND, I'M THIS GIRL'S...
AH!
NO, IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!!

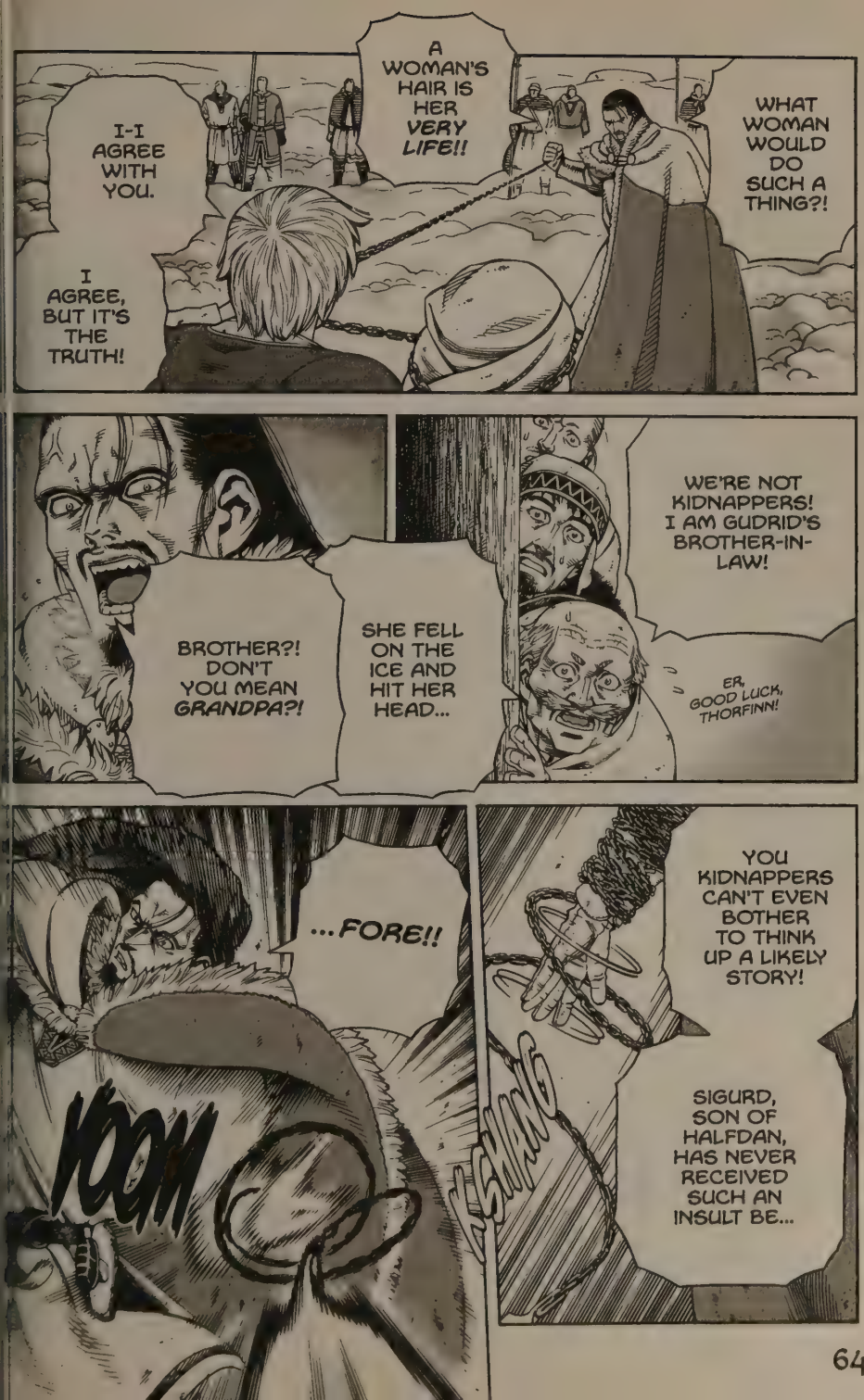
EEEP!
EVERY-ONE, BACK BEHIND THE MAST!!
VOOM
WHOA!!
HANG ON!
YOU'RE MIS-UND-
WHAP

HYEEP!!
A CHAIN?!
JANGLE
GASHNK

TING
KSHANG
!
GWP...
ZSH
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK, EITHER!
SHE CUT HER HAIR ON HER OWN!
MR MR
HE'S GOOD!
OH CRAP!
WHOA!! NO WAY!!
HE TANGLED UP SIGGY'S CHAIN!!

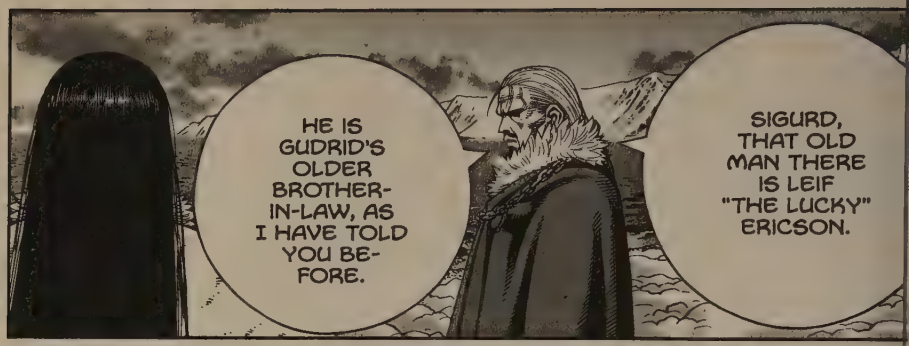
HOW ELSE WOULD YOU EXPLAIN GUDRID'S HAIR?!
SHK
WHAT AM I MIS-UNDER-STANDING, YOU KNAVE?!
THUD
WHAM
DOES IT BRING YOU PLEASURE TO CUT OFF A WOMAN'S HAIR?!
HOW COULD YOU DO SUCH A THING?!
DAMN! SLIPPERY BUGGER!!

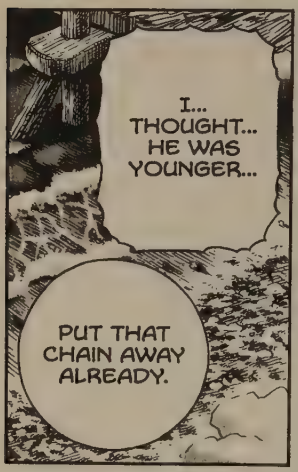
WATCH OUT!
?!
THUD
OUCH!
THOR-FINN!!

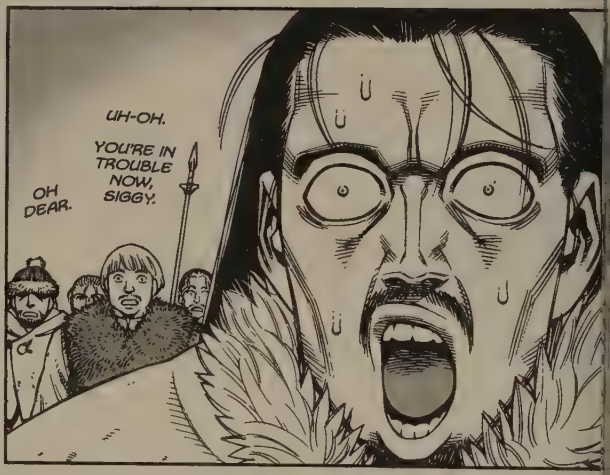

I-I AGREE WITH YOU.
I AGREE, BUT IT'S THE TRUTH!
A WOMAN'S HAIR IS HER VERY LIFE!!
WHAT WOMAN WOULD DO SUCH A THING?!
BROTHER?! DON'T YOU MEAN GRANDPA?!
SHE FELL ON THE ICE AND HIT HER HEAD...
WE'RE NOT KIDNAPPERS! I AM GUDRID'S BROTHER-IN-LAW!
ER, GOOD LUCK, THORFINN!
...FORE!!
WOOM
YOU KIDNAPPERS CAN'T EVEN BOTHER TO THINK UP A LIKELY STORY!
SIGURD, SON OF HALFDAN, HAS NEVER RECEIVED SUCH AN INSULT BE...
SHING

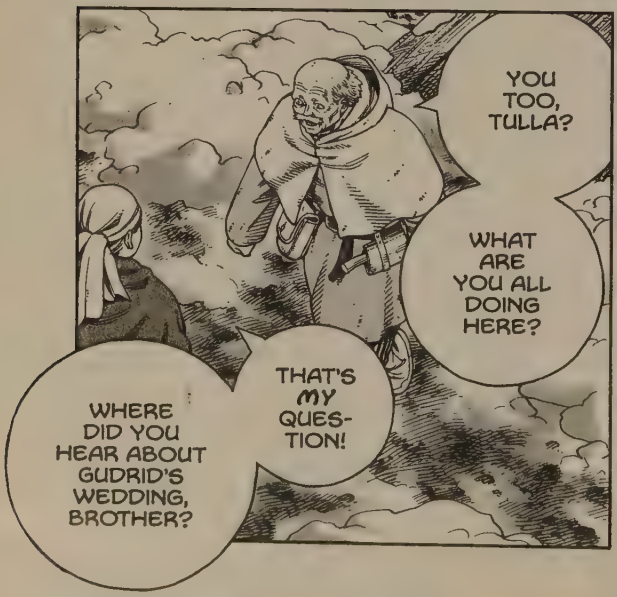
JOLT

JANGLE
SO YOU BLOCKED IT. YOU HAVE GOOD EYES.
WE'LL HAVE TO SEE HOW MANY TIMES THAT RAG CAN WITHSTAND MY CHAIN BLADE.
SHAK
WE TOLD YOU, IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK! JUST LISTEN!
STOP, EINAR! GET BACK!
STOP, SIGURD.

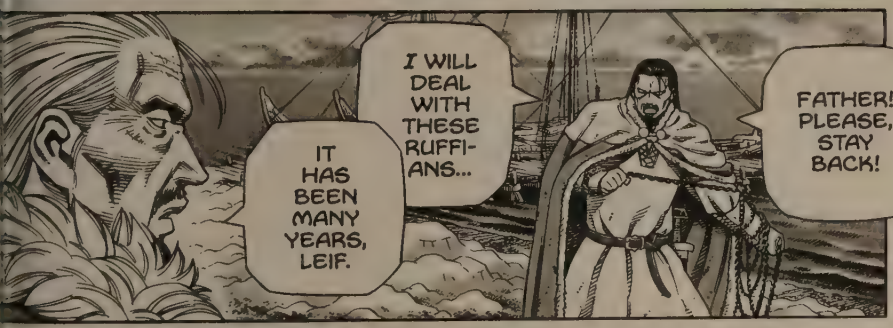

HE IS GUDRID'S OLDER BROTHER-IN-LAW, AS I HAVE TOLD YOU BE-FORE.
SIGURD, THAT OLD MAN THERE IS LEIF "THE LUCKY" ERICSON.

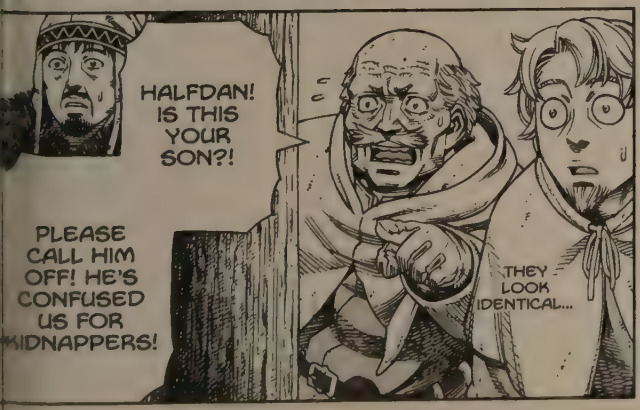

I... THOUGHT... HE WAS YOUNGER...
PUT THAT CHAIN AWAY ALREADY.


UH-OH.
YOU'RE IN TROUBLE NOW, SIGGY.
OH DEAR.

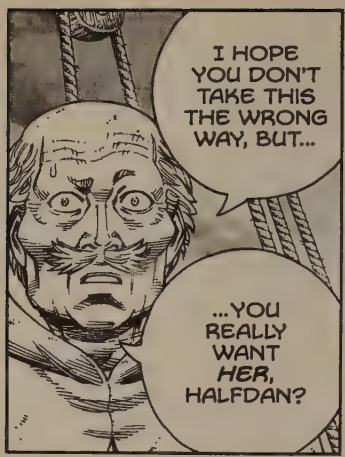

YOU TOO, TULLA?
WHAT ARE YOU ALL DOING HERE?
THAT'S MY QUES-TION!
WHERE DID YOU HEAR ABOUT GUDRID'S WEDDING, BROTHER?

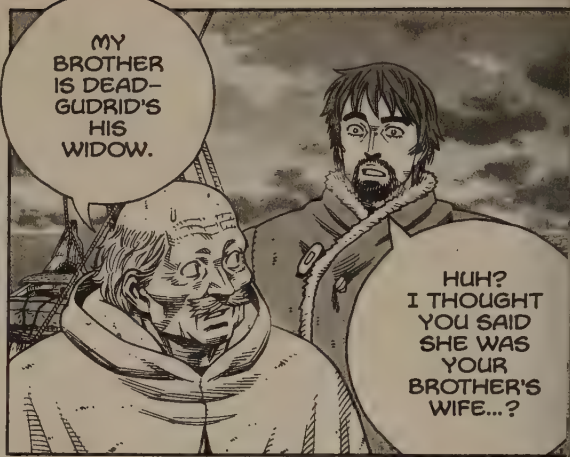
LEIF!
TEP—TEP—TEP

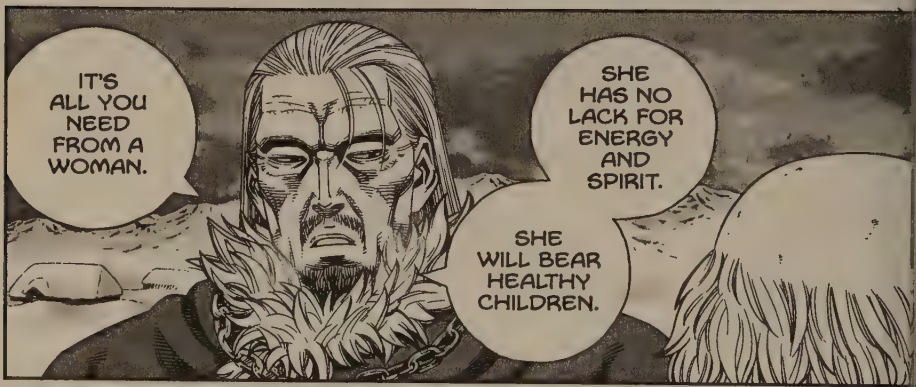

IT HAS BEEN MANY YEARS, LEIF.
I WILL DEAL WITH THESE RUFFI-ANS...
FATHER! PLEASE, STAY BACK!

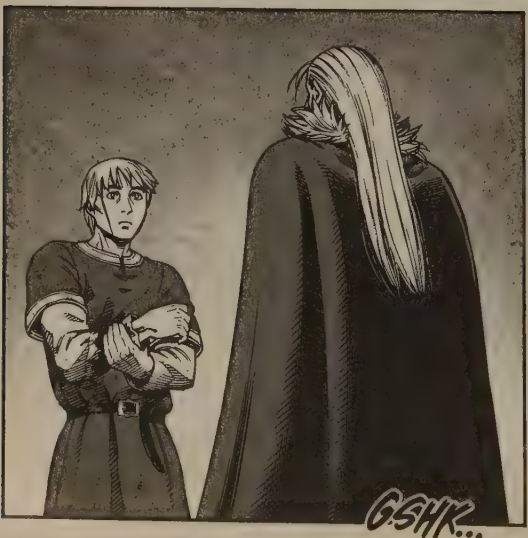

HALFDAN! IS THIS YOUR SON?!
PLEASE CALL HIM OFF! HE'S CONFUSED US FOR KIDNAPPERS!
THEY LOOK IDENTICAL...

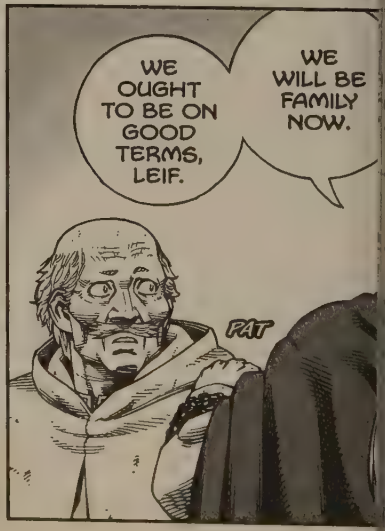
...HMM?


I HOPE YOU DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY, BUT...
...YOU REALLY WANT *HER*, HALFDAN?

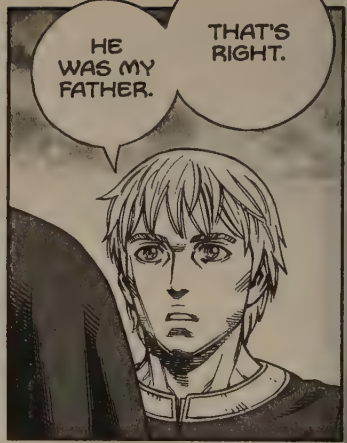

MY BROTHER IS DEAD– GUDRID'S HIS WIDOW.
HUH? I THOUGHT YOU SAID SHE WAS YOUR BROTHER'S WIFE...?


IT'S ALL YOU NEED FROM A WOMAN.
SHE HAS NO LACK FOR ENERGY AND SPIRIT.
SHE WILL BEAR HEALTHY CHILDREN.


GSHK...


WE OUGHT TO BE ON GOOD TERMS, LEIF.
WE WILL BE FAMILY NOW.
PAT

HE'S SO RICH!
SHE'S TO BE WED TO SIGURD, THE SON OF HALFDAN!
MMMM...
SO YOU DIDN'T KNOW, AFTER ALL!
WELL, IT'S QUITE A GOOD DEAL, IF YOU ASK ME!
SCRATCH SCRATCH
WEDDING?! FOR GUDRID?!
IT IS TRUE. I'M SORRY TO HAVE FINALIZED THE PLAN WHILE YOU WERE AWAY, LEIF.
BUT THERE WAS NO TELLING WHEN YOU'D BE BACK FROM YOUR LATEST VOYAGE, AS YOU KNOW.

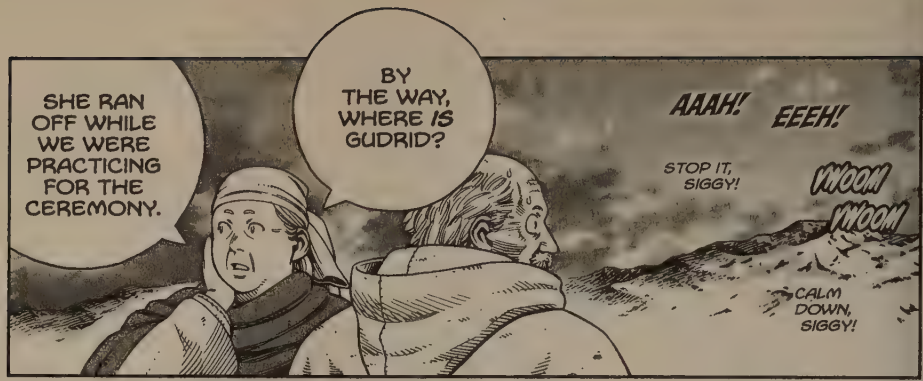

HE WAS MY FATHER.
THAT'S RIGHT.

THE REST OF YOU, ESCORT OUR GUESTS.
YOU'LL NEED YOUR ARM SEEN TO FIRST.
COME TO MY HOME AFTER THAT, THORFINN.

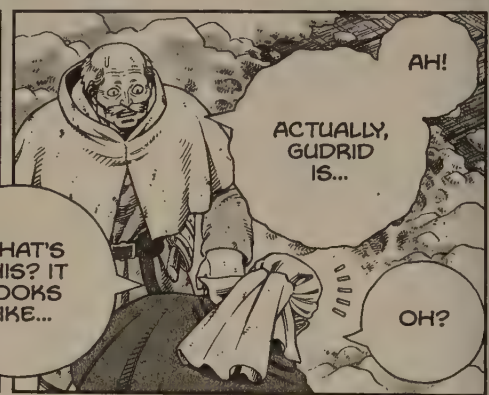
...
HMPH.

YOU DO NOT DISCERN THE FINER DETAILS.
IT'S YOUR WORST HABIT, BOY.

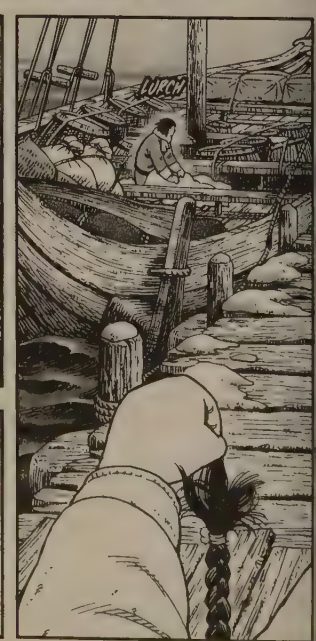
YOUR NAME?
I AM IMPRESSED.
I MET YOU ONCE, WHEN I WAS YOUNG.
THORFINN...
...SON OF THORS.
THORS...?
THORS, THE TROLL OF JOM?


SHE RAN OFF WHILE WE WERE PRACTICING FOR THE CEREMONY.
BY THE WAY, WHERE IS GUDRID?
AAAH!
EEEH!
STOP IT, SIGGY!
WOOM
WOOM
CALM DOWN, SIGGY!

WHAT'S THIS? IT LOOKS LIKE...


AH!
ACTUALLY, GUDRID IS...
OH?

...?
IS IT MORN-ING?

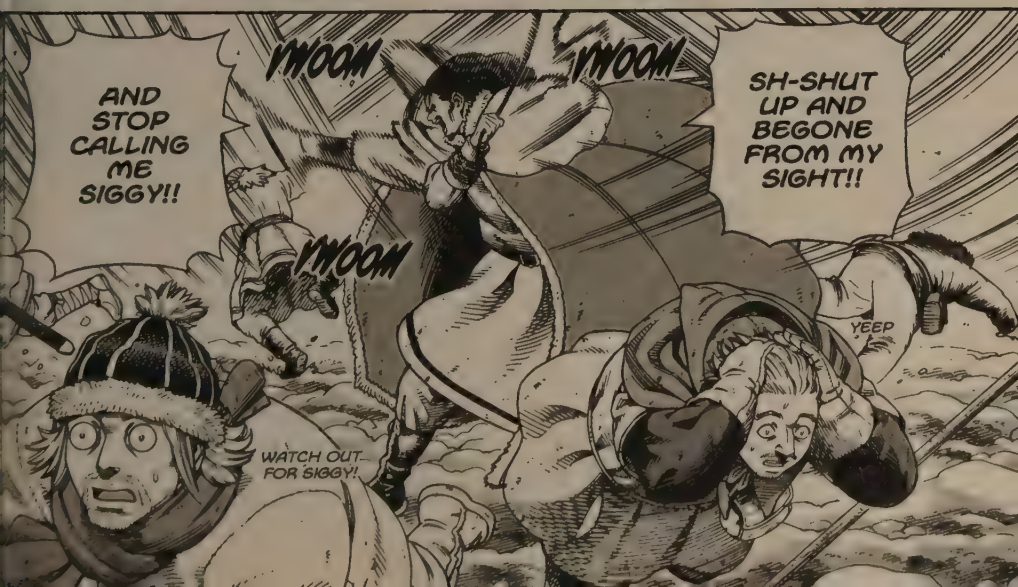

LUROM

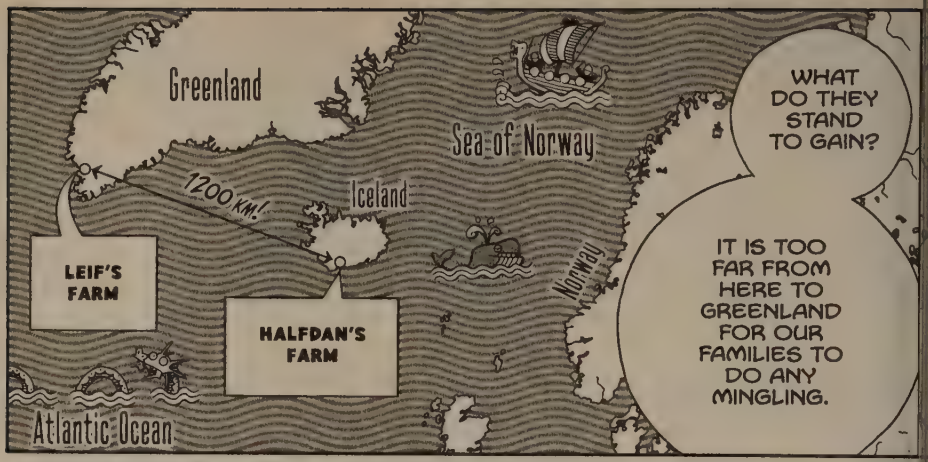
HER...
HER HAIR...

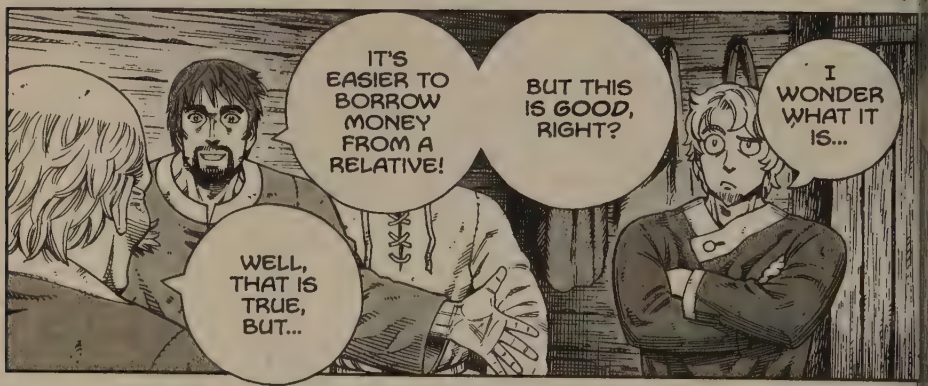
I WILL NOT HAVE MY OWNINGS INHERITED BY A FOOL.

HANG IN THERE, SIGGY. EVERYONE MAKES MISTAKES!
DON'T GET DOWN, SIGGY.
SIGGY.
SIGGY.

GRRK...

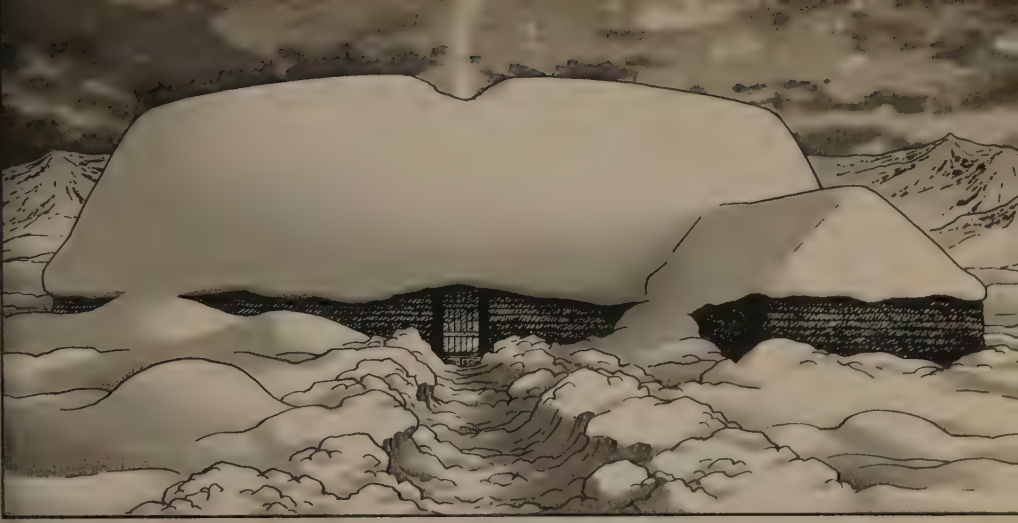

AND STOP CALLING ME SIGGY!!
VWOOM
VWOOM
VWOOM
SH-SHUT UP AND BEGONE FROM MY SIGHT!!
YEEP
WATCH OUT FOR SIGGY!


Greenland
Sea of Norway
1200 KM!
Iceland
Norway
LEIF'S FARM
HALFDAN'S FARM
Atlantic Ocean
WHAT DO THEY STAND TO GAIN?
IT IS TOO FAR FROM HERE TO GREENLAND FOR OUR FAMILIES TO DO ANY MINGLING.


IT'S EASIER TO BORROW MONEY FROM A RELATIVE!
BUT THIS IS GOOD, RIGHT?
I WONDER WHAT IT IS...
WELL, THAT IS TRUE, BUT...

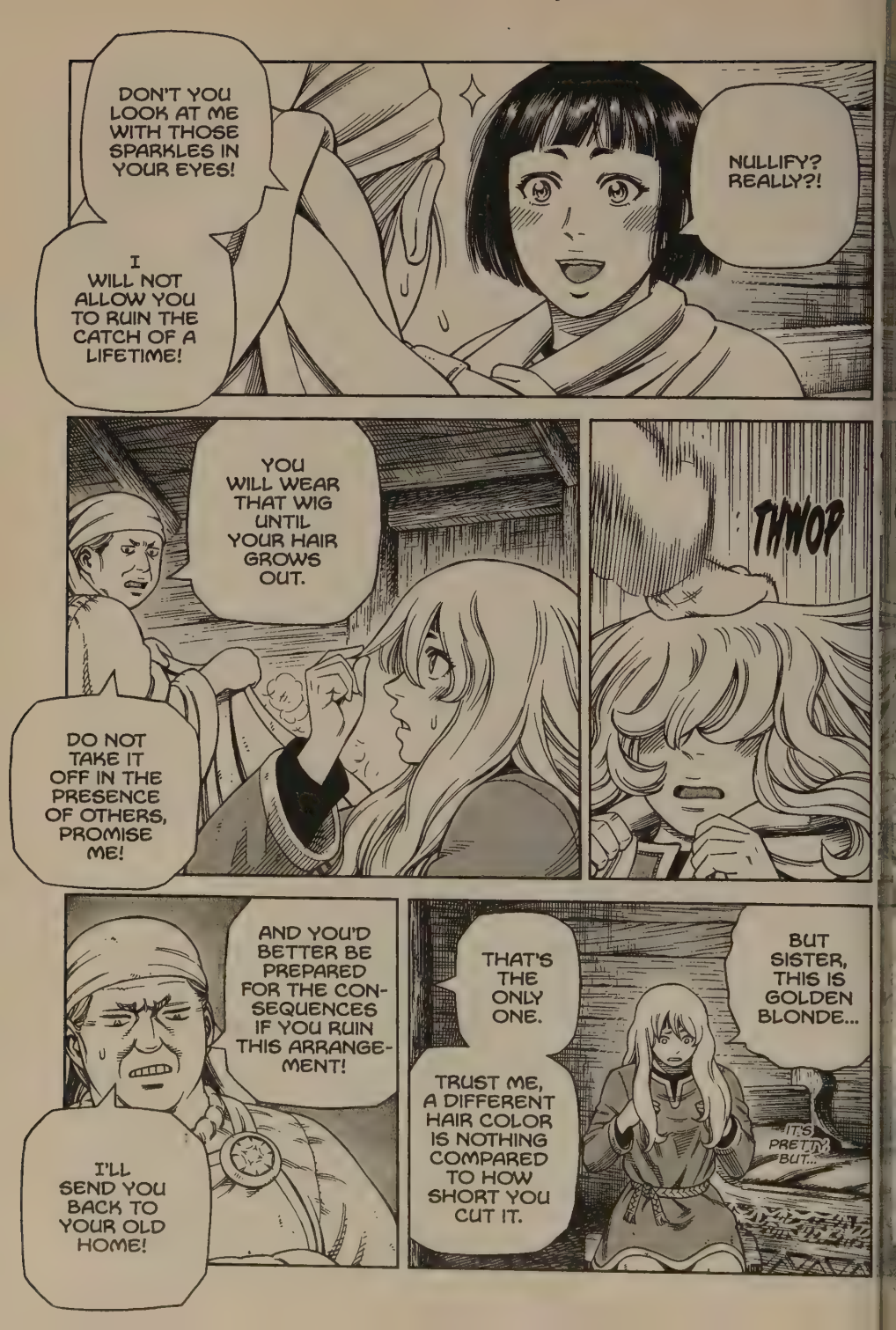
WHAT ?!
GRAH!
I'M BUSY RIGHT NOW!!

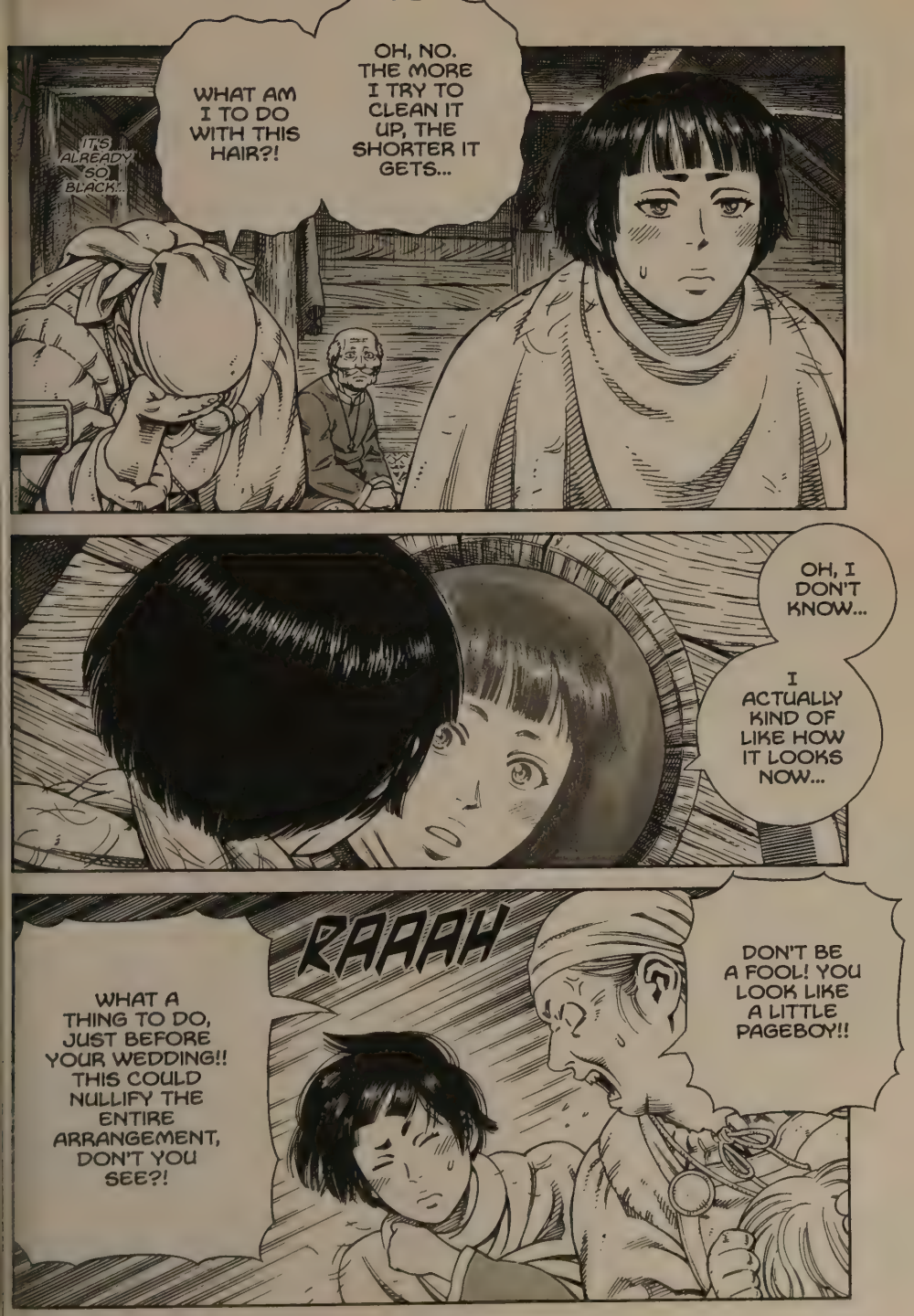
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS ABOUT THIS, TULLA?
HELLO? TULLA?

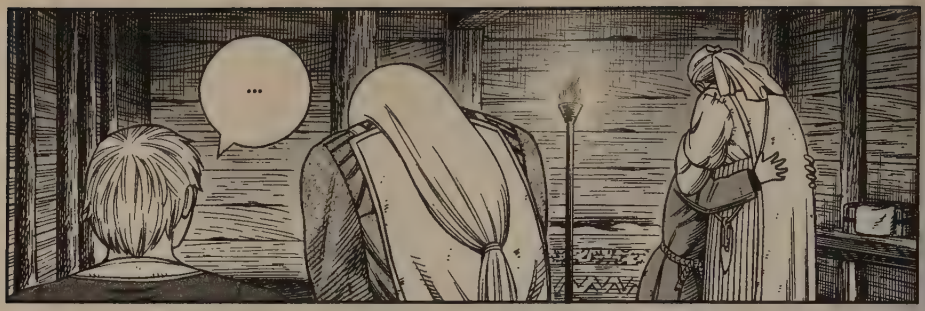


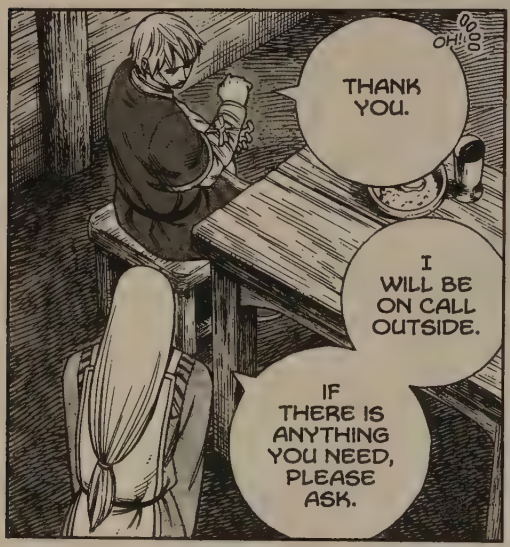
WHY ELSE WOULD HALFDAN SEEK TO CONNECT HIMSELF TO OUR FAMILY?
THERE'S SOME-THING GOING ON.

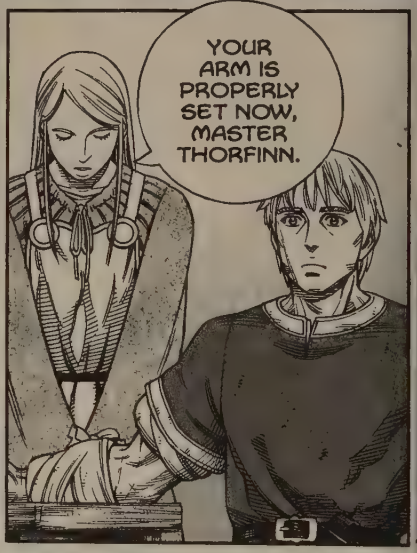
THAT'S WHAT I HEAR.
DID THE MARRIAGE PROPOSAL COME FROM HALFDAN'S SIDE?
BUT WE GREENLANDERS ARE A DESTITUTE PEOPLE. WE'RE A POOR MATCH FOR HALFDAN'S WEALTH.

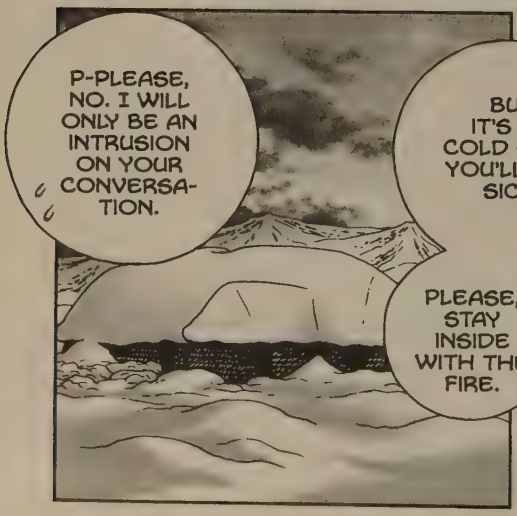

DON'T YOU LOOK AT ME WITH THOSE SPARKLES IN YOUR EYES!
I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO RUIN THE CATCH OF A LIFETIME!
NULLIFY? REALLY?!
YOU WILL WEAR THAT WIG UNTIL YOUR HAIR GROWS OUT.
DO NOT TAKE IT OFF IN THE PRESENCE OF OTHERS, PROMISE ME!
THWOP
AND YOU'D BETTER BE PREPARED FOR THE CONSEQUENCES IF YOU RUIN THIS ARRANGEMENT!
I'LL SEND YOU BACK TO YOUR OLD HOME!
THAT'S THE ONLY ONE.
TRUST ME, A DIFFERENT HAIR COLOR IS NOTHING COMPARED TO HOW SHORT YOU CUT IT.
BUT SISTER, THIS IS GOLDEN BLONDE...
IT'S PRETTY BUT...


WHAT AM I TO DO WITH THIS HAIR?!
OH, NO. THE MORE I TRY TO CLEAN IT UP, THE SHORTER IT GETS...
IT'S ALREADY SO BLACK...
OH, I DON'T KNOW...
I ACTUALLY KIND OF LIKE HOW IT LOOKS NOW...
RAAAH
WHAT A THING TO DO, JUST BEFORE YOUR WEDDING!! THIS COULD NULLIFY THE ENTIRE ARRANGEMENT, DON'T YOU SEE?!
DON'T BE A FOOL! YOU LOOK LIKE A LITTLE PAGEBOY!!


...


OH!!
THANK YOU.
I WILL BE ON CALL OUTSIDE.
IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU NEED, PLEASE ASK.


YOUR ARM IS PROPERLY SET NOW, MASTER THORFINN.


P-PLEASE, NO. I WILL ONLY BE AN INTRUSION ON YOUR CONVERSATION.

BUT IT'S SO COLD OUT... YOU'LL GET SICK.
PLEASE, STAY INSIDE WITH THE FIRE.
HUH? OUT-SIDE...?

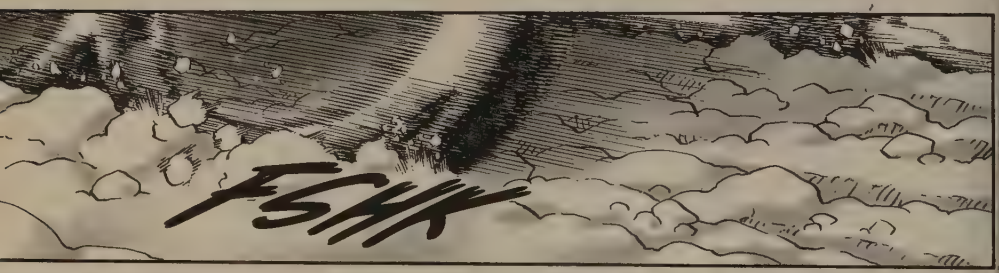
THEN YOU'D BETTER NOT GET INTO ANY MORE NON-SENSE!
WAAAH!
WHUMP
MY HOME IS SO BORING AND OUT OF THE WAY! I'LL *DIE* OF BOREDOM!!
PLEASE, SISTER, ANYTHING BUT THAT!!

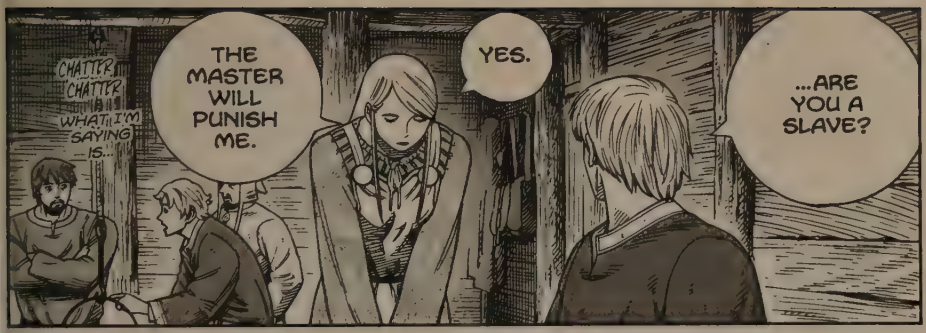
STOP YOUR FAKE BAWL-ING.
WHY, YOU LITTLE HAND-FUL...
A WOMAN CAN'T BE AN UNWED WIDOW AT 19 YEARS OLD, YOU KNOW...
BOO HOO HOO!

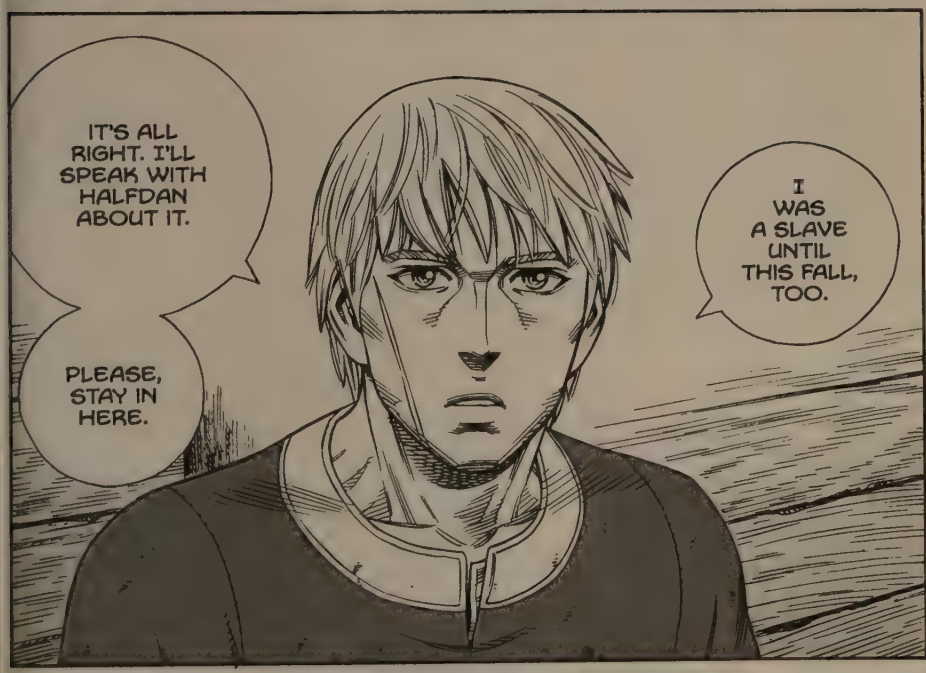
WAAAH
AAH
AHHH

YOU'RE BEING WED TO A PROPER, WEALTHY FAMILY, NOT OUR MISERABLE LITTLE FARM.
WHAT-EVER IS THE PROBLEM, MY DEAR?

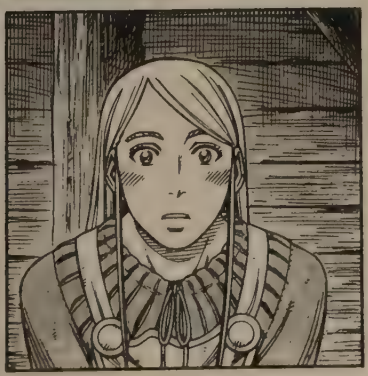
HALFDAN SUMMONS YOU TO THE MANSION. I WILL SHOW YOU THE WAY.
CREAK
PARDON ME, GUESTS!

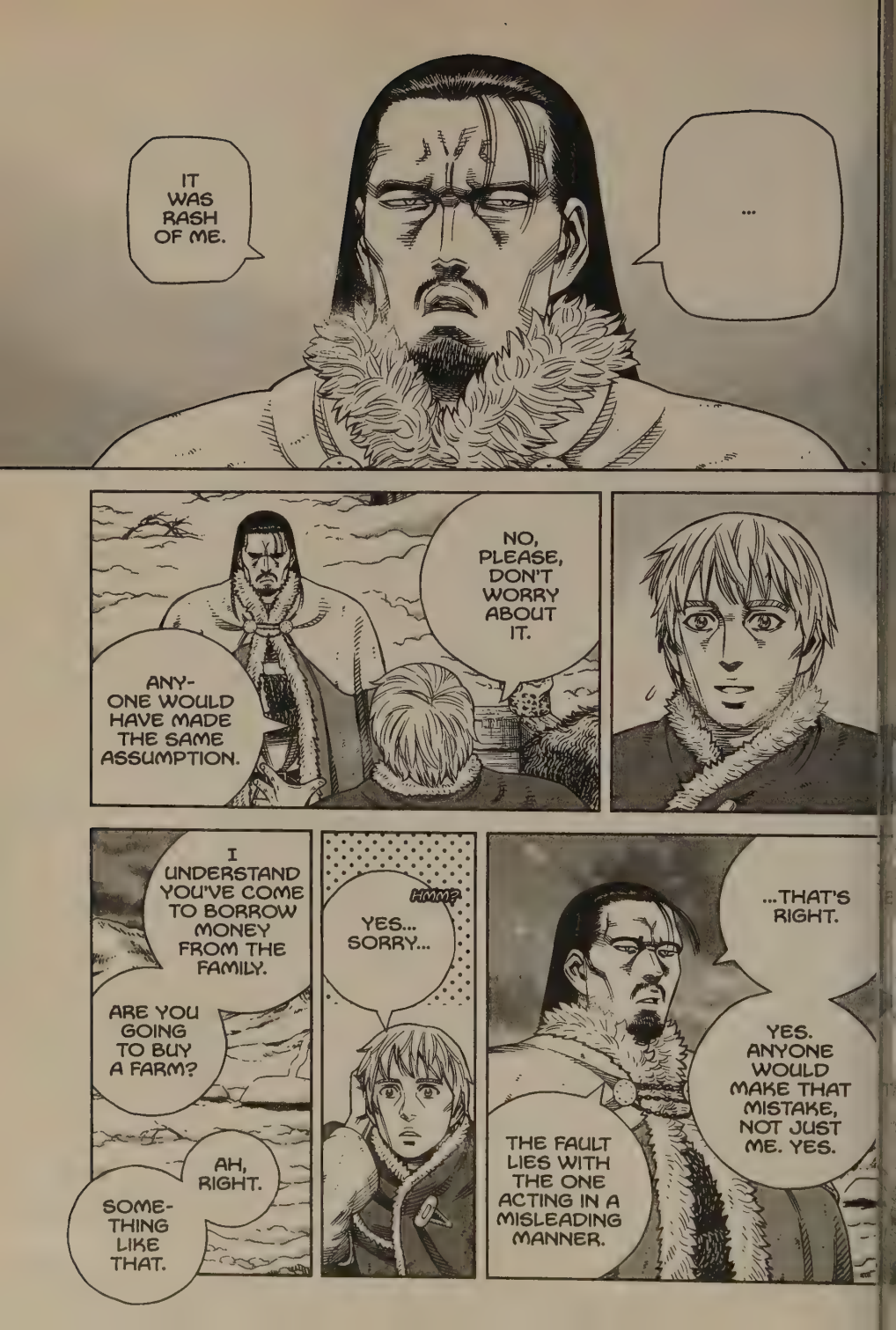

FSHK


CHATTER CHATTER
WHAT I'M SAYING IS...
THE MASTER WILL PUNISH ME.
YES.
...ARE YOU A SLAVE?

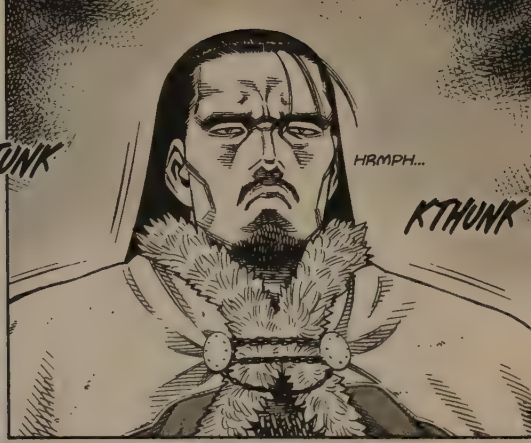

IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'LL SPEAK WITH HALFDAN ABOUT IT.
PLEASE, STAY IN HERE.
I WAS A SLAVE UNTIL THIS FALL, TOO.

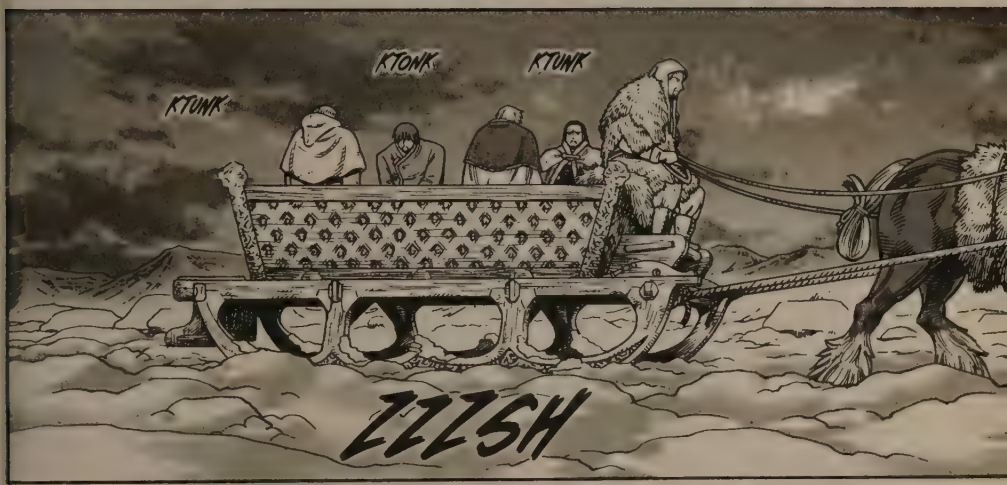
...Y...
YES, SIR...




IT WAS RASH OF ME.
...
NO, PLEASE, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
ANY-ONE WOULD HAVE MADE THE SAME ASSUMPTION.
I UNDERSTAND YOU'VE COME TO BORROW MONEY FROM THE FAMILY.
ARE YOU GOING TO BUY A FARM?
AH, RIGHT.
SOME-THING LIKE THAT.
HMM?
YES... SORRY...
...THAT'S RIGHT.
YES. ANYONE WOULD MAKE THAT MISTAKE, NOT JUST ME. YES.
THE FAULT LIES WITH THE ONE ACTING IN A MISLEADING MANNER.

THUNK
KTUNK


HRMPH...
KTHUNK

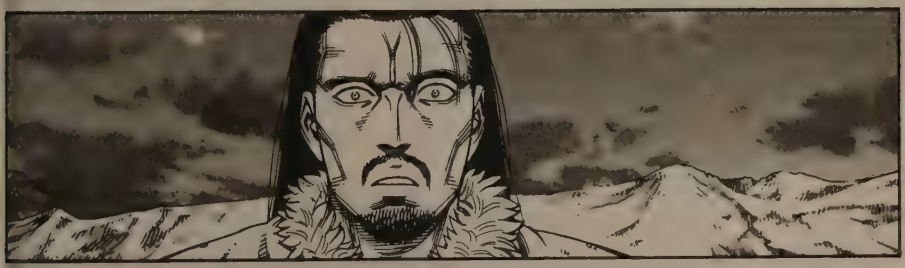

KTONK
KTUNK
KTUNK
ZZZSH

IT'S FINE. NOTHING TOO SERIOUS...
HUH? OH...
HOW IS YOUR ARM?

IT'S SO GLOOMY!
DO YOU KNOW ANY JOKES TO LIGHTEN THE MOOD, EINAR?

CHAPTER 104: THE FETTERED TERN (4)

AND I AM LOOKING FOR SOME-ONE TO LEND THEIR WEALTH TO OUR CAUSE.
I WISH TO DEVELOP THE LAND OF VINLAND, FAR TO THE WEST.



YOU?!
VINLAND ...?!
?
??

GUDRID, THE GIRL YOU WANT TO BRING UNDER OUR ROOF.

WHO DO YOU SUPPOSE SPUN AND WOVE THIS?

ISN'T IT DREAD-FUL?

I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S TALENT OR DISCIPLINE SHE'S LACK-ING...

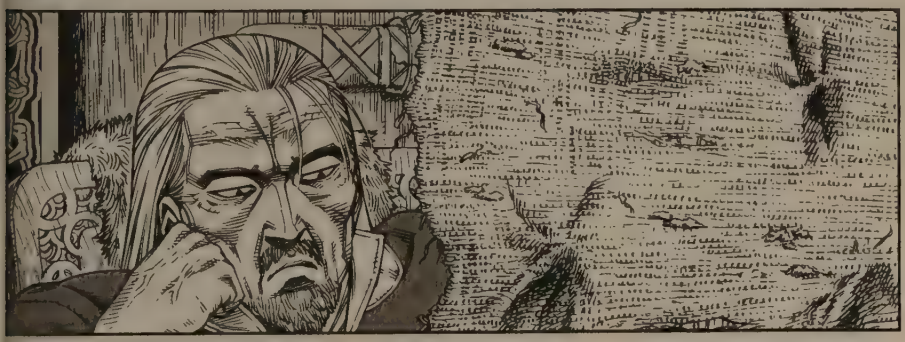
HUFF

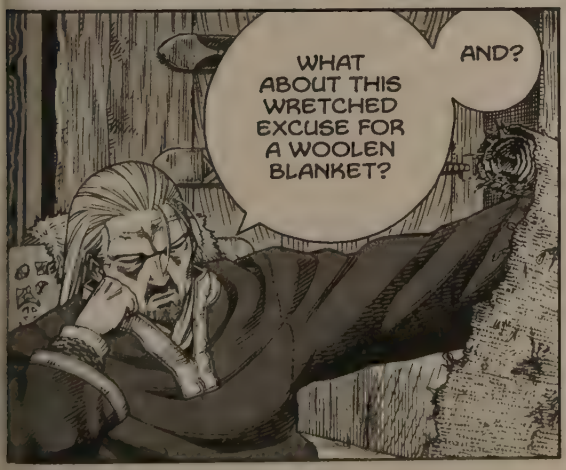
SHE'S SLOWER THAN A GIRL OF TEN.

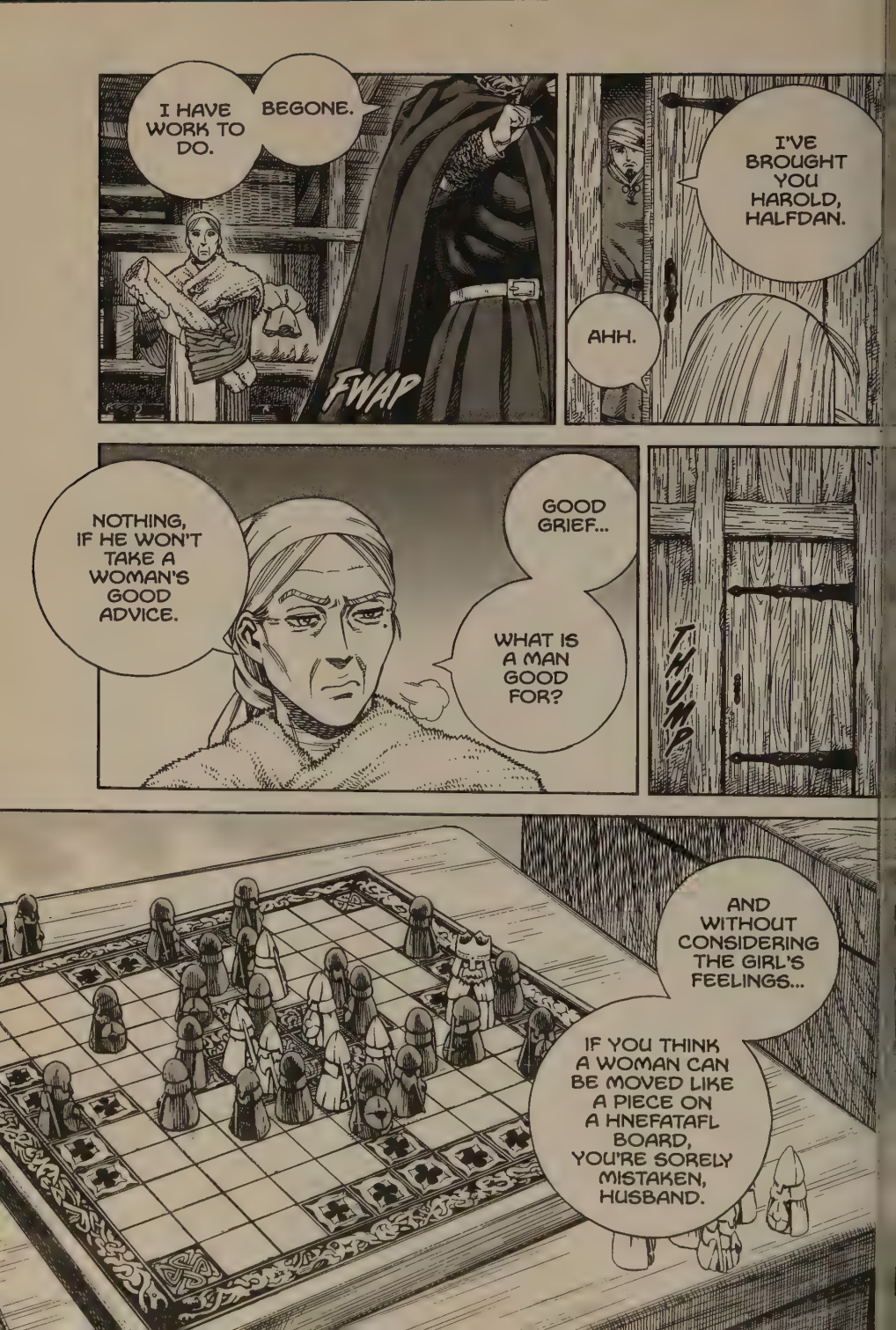
AND THIS FABRIC TOOK HER HALF A YEAR TO COMPLETE!

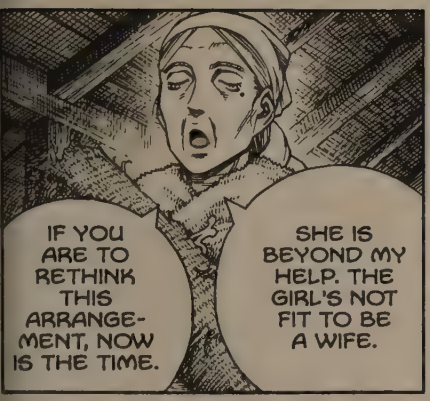
IF SHE HAD A KNACK FOR ANYTHING... IT WOULD BE TENDING SHEEP, I SUPPOSE.

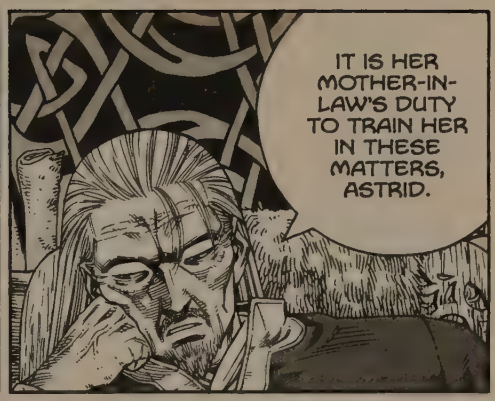
I LET HER TRY COOKING. I LET HER TRY CLEANING. SHE'S TERRIBLE AT THEM ALL.

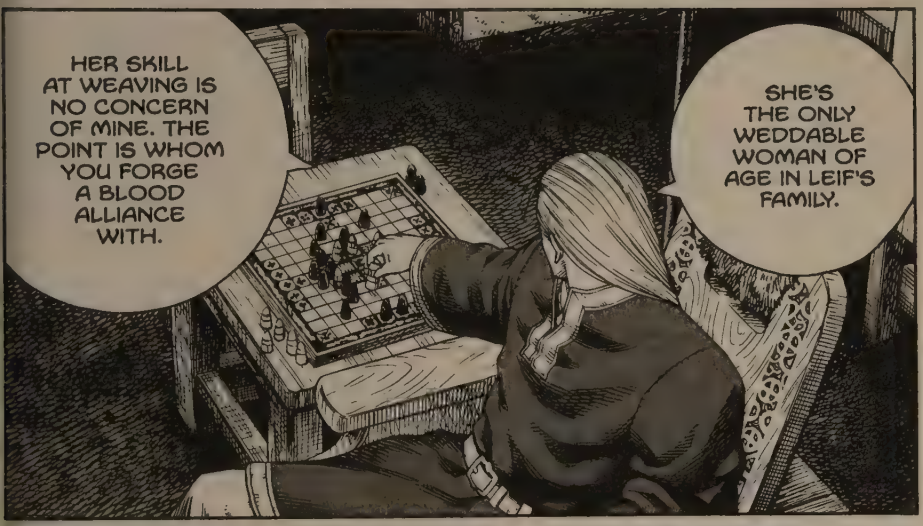


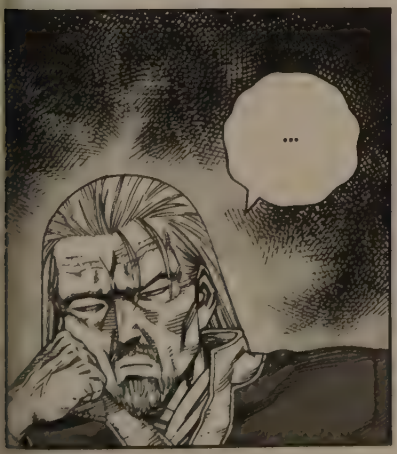

WHAT ABOUT THIS WRETCHED EXCUSE FOR A WOOLEN BLANKET?
AND?


I HAVE WORK TO DO.
BEGONE.
FWAP
I'VE BROUGHT YOU HAROLD, HALFDAN.
AHH.
NOTHING, IF HE WON'T TAKE A WOMAN'S GOOD ADVICE.
GOOD GRIEF...
WHAT IS A MAN GOOD FOR?
THUMP
AND WITHOUT CONSIDERING THE GIRL'S FEELINGS...
IF YOU THINK A WOMAN CAN BE MOVED LIKE A PIECE ON A HNEFATAFL BOARD, YOU'RE SORELY MISTAKEN, HUSBAND.


IF YOU ARE TO RETHINK THIS ARRANGE-MENT, NOW IS THE TIME.
SHE IS BEYOND MY HELP. THE GIRL'S NOT FIT TO BE A WIFE.


IT IS HER MOTHER-IN-LAW'S DUTY TO TRAIN HER IN THESE MATTERS, ASTRID.


HER SKILL AT WEAVING IS NO CONCERN OF MINE. THE POINT IS WHOM YOU FORGE A BLOOD ALLIANCE WITH.
SHE'S THE ONLY WEDDABLE WOMAN OF AGE IN LEIF'S FAMILY.


...

YOU WED ME TO STRENGTHEN YOUR ALLIANCE WITH A FAMILY OF POOR FISHERS?
IS THAT SO?
THIS IS NEWS!

WHAT IS YOUR DEFENSE, HAROLD?

THIS DOES NOT MEET OUR LAW.

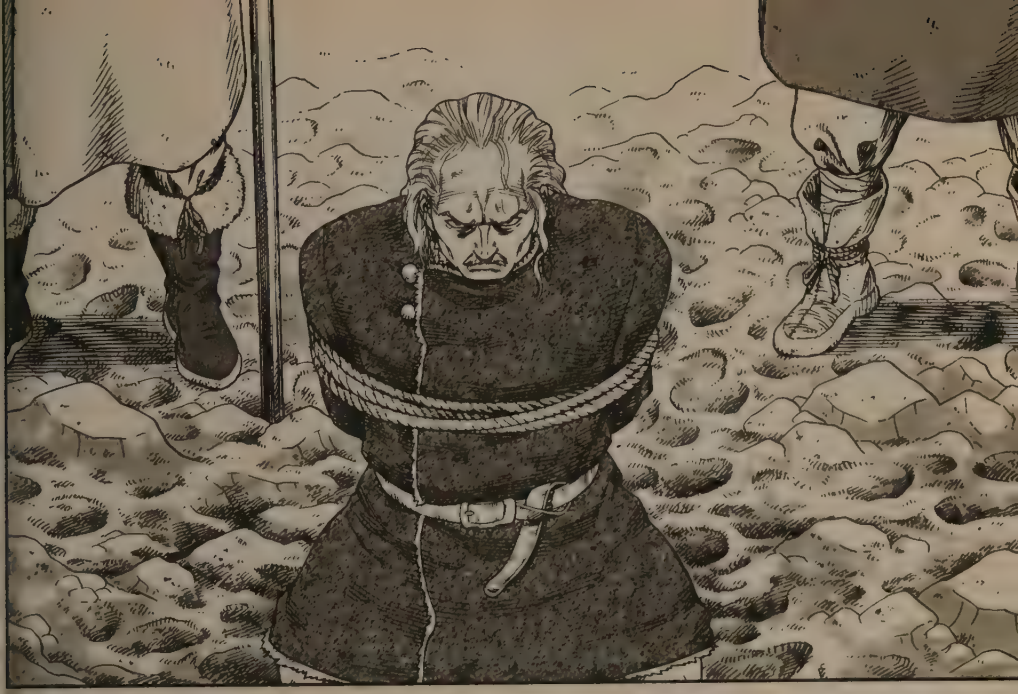
SO THIS IS HOW THE INFAMOUS MONEY-LENDER HALFDAN DOES HIS BUSINESS?

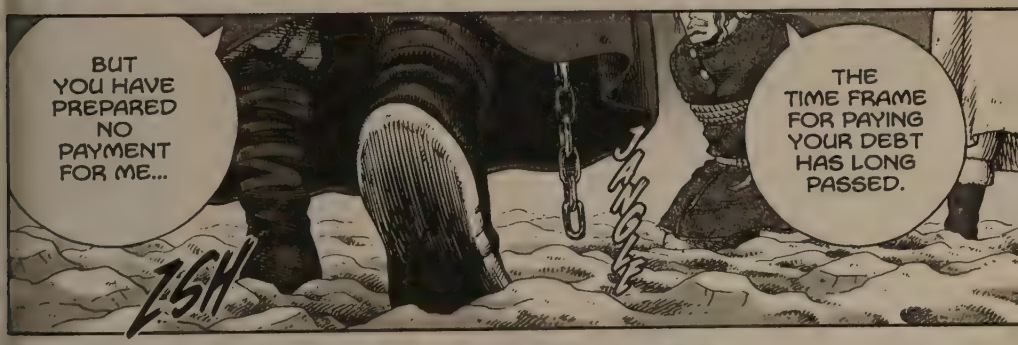
...HMPH!

OFFERING LARGE SUMS TO STRUG-GLING FARMS...

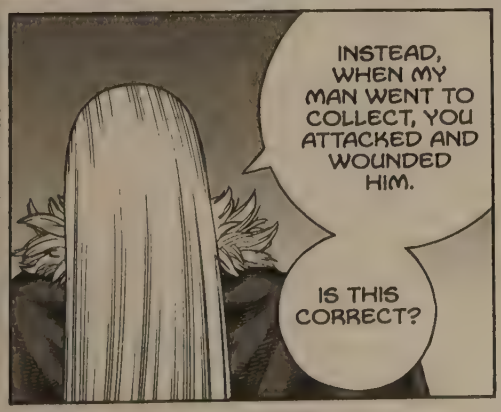
...THEN WAITING FOR THE PAYMENT TO FALTER AND BUYING OUT THE LAND.

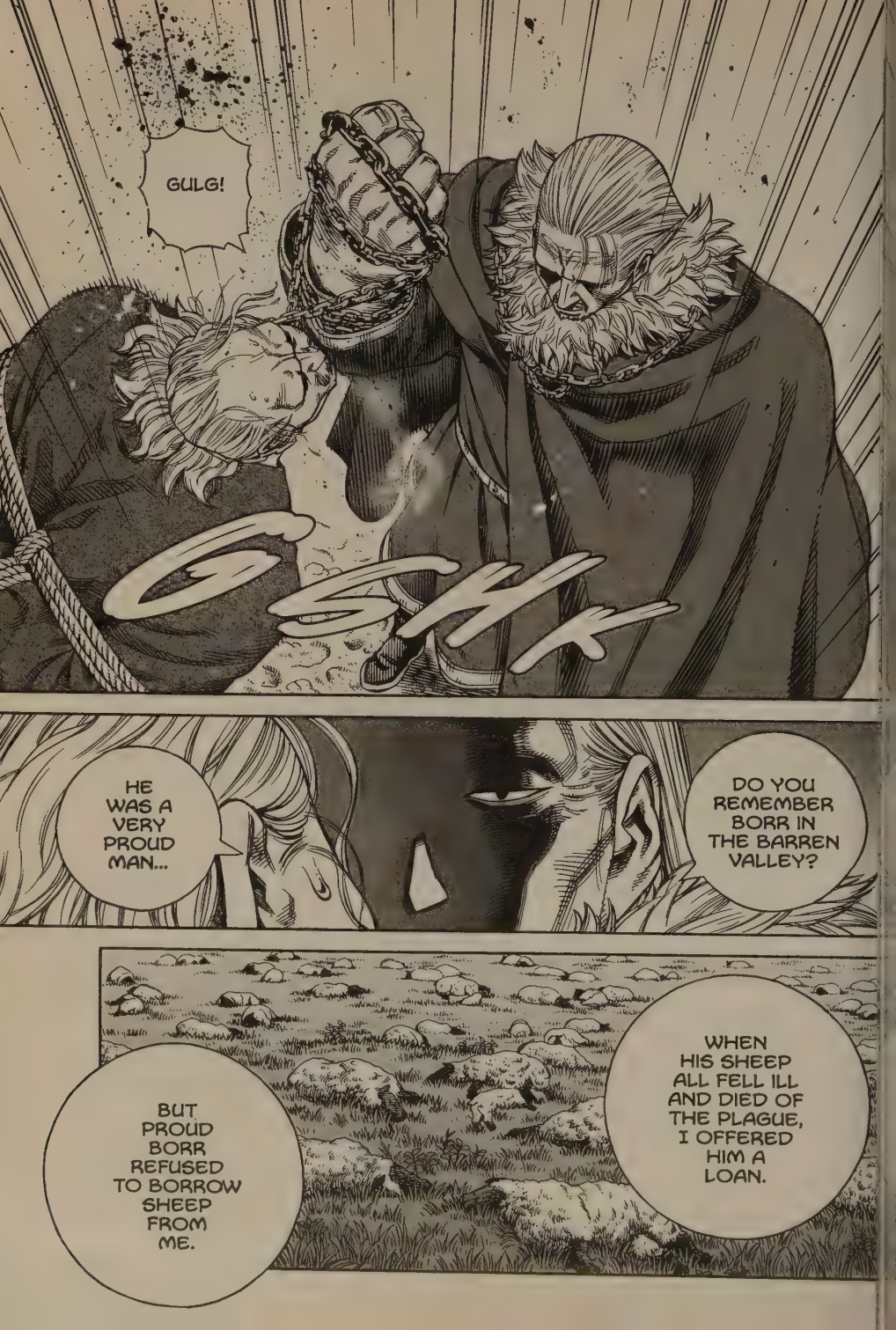
YOU WILL MEET A CRUEL END ONE DAY, MARK MY WORDS!

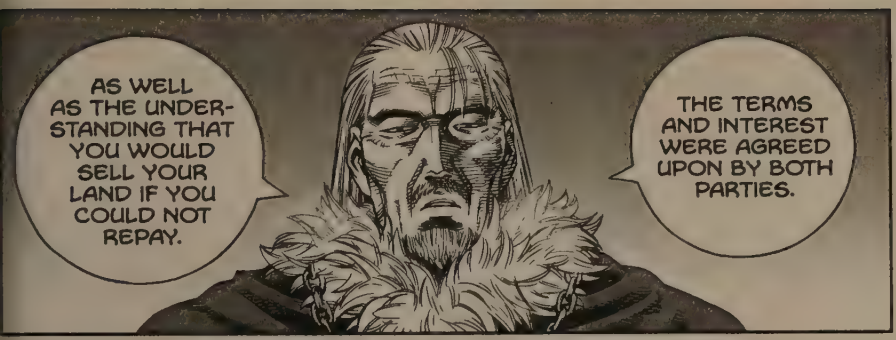


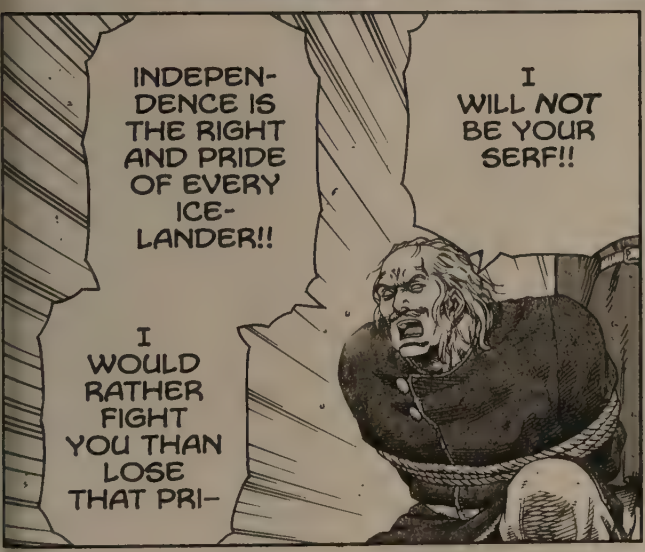

BUT YOU HAVE PREPARED NO PAYMENT FOR ME...
THE TIME FRAME FOR PAYING YOUR DEBT HAS LONG PASSED.
ZISH
JANGL

YES.
THERE WAS A THIRD-PARTY WITNESS THERE WHO CAN CORROBORATE MY STORY.


INSTEAD, WHEN MY MAN WENT TO COLLECT, YOU ATTACKED AND WOUNDED HIM.
IS THIS CORRECT?

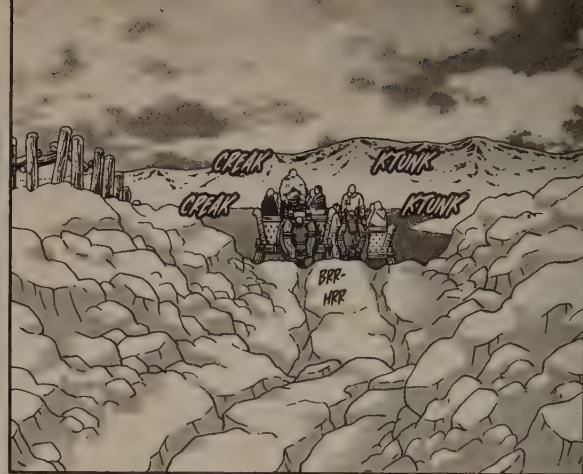

GULG!
GGKK
HE WAS A VERY PROUD MAN...
DO YOU REMEMBER BORR IN THE BARREN VALLEY?
BUT PROUD BORR REFUSED TO BORROW SHEEP FROM ME.
WHEN HIS SHEEP ALL FELL ILL AND DIED OF THE PLAGUE, I OFFERED HIM A LOAN.


AS WELL AS THE UNDERSTANDING THAT YOU WOULD SELL YOUR LAND IF YOU COULD NOT REPAY.
THE TERMS AND INTEREST WERE AGREED UPON BY BOTH PARTIES.


INDEPENDENCE IS THE RIGHT AND PRIDE OF EVERY ICELANDER!!
I WILL NOT BE YOUR SERF!!
I WOULD RATHER FIGHT YOU THAN LOSE THAT PRI–

...
I...

SWIP...

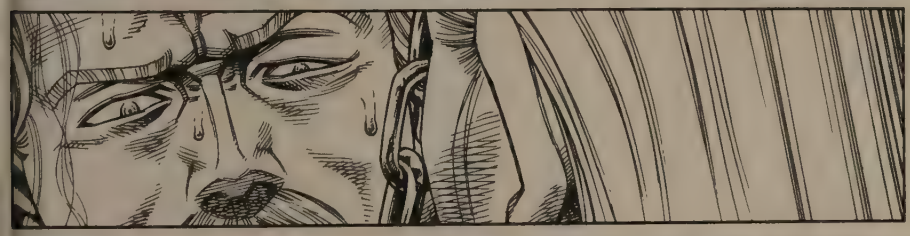

CREAK
KTUNK
CREAK
KTUNK
BRR-
HRR

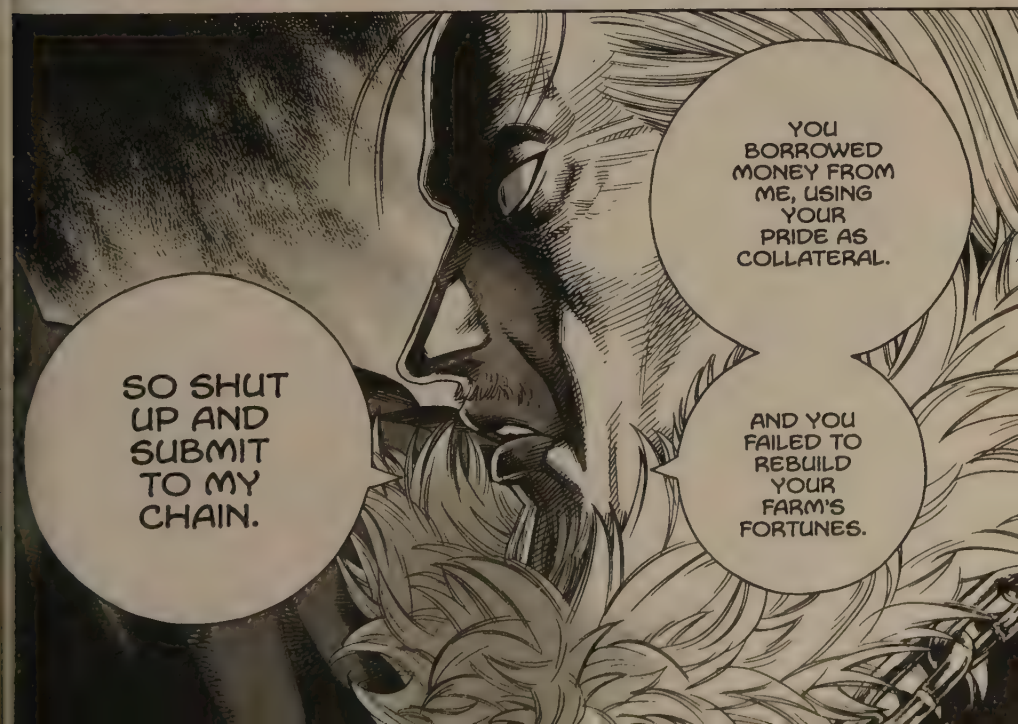
I'LL LEAVE HIM UP TO YOU.
DO LIKE WE ALWAYS DO.
YES, SIR.

OUR GUESTS.
SEND THEM TO MY CHAMBER.

ZWIP...

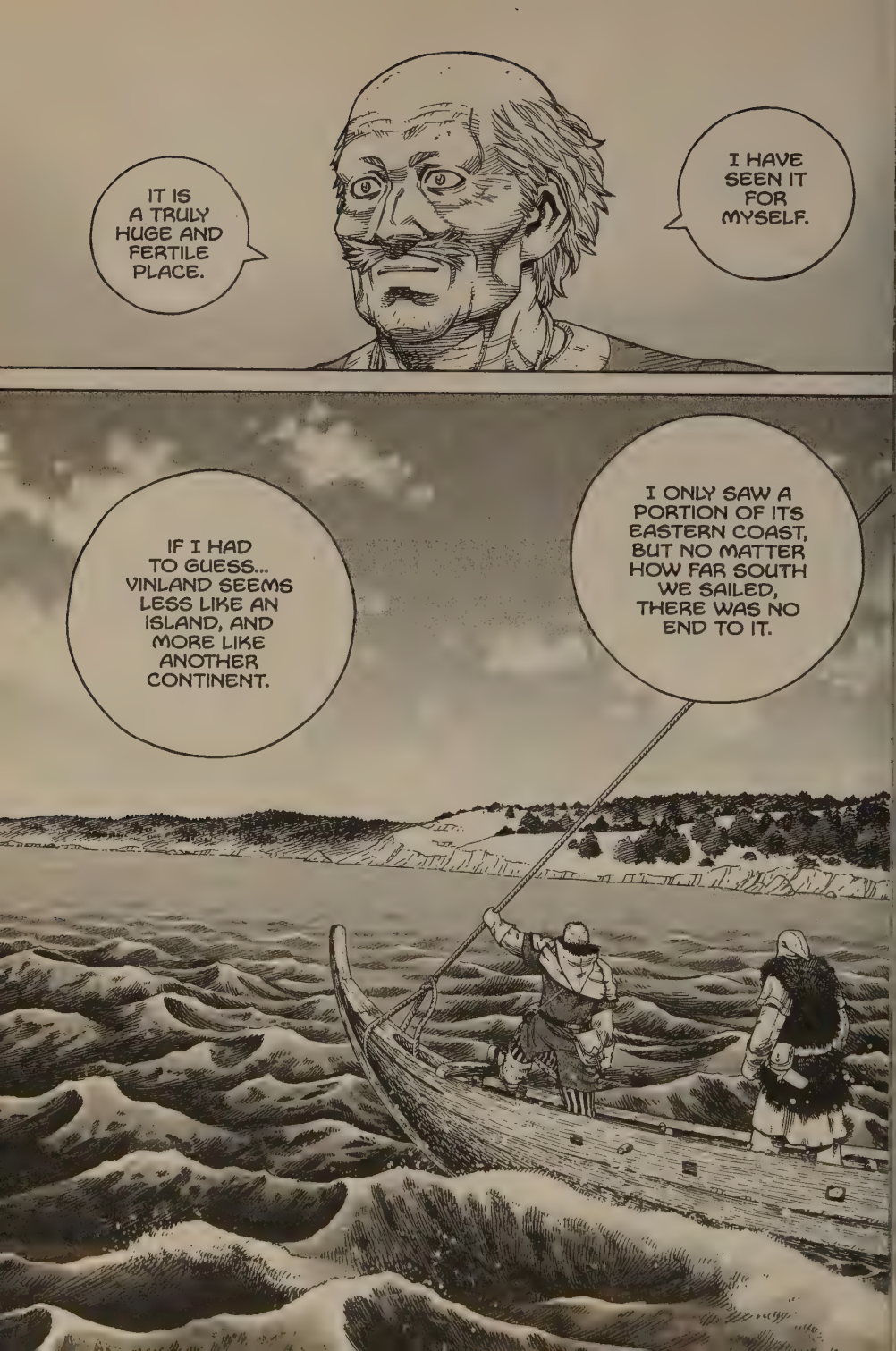
BORR'S FAMILY DID NOT SURVIVE THE WINTER.
HIM, HIS CHILDREN, AND HIS WIFE ALL STARVED, FREEZING WITH HIS PRECIOUS PRIDE.




YOU BORROWED MONEY FROM ME, USING YOUR PRIDE AS COLLATERAL.
AND YOU FAILED TO REBUILD YOUR FARM'S FORTUNES.
SO SHUT UP AND SUBMIT TO MY CHAIN.

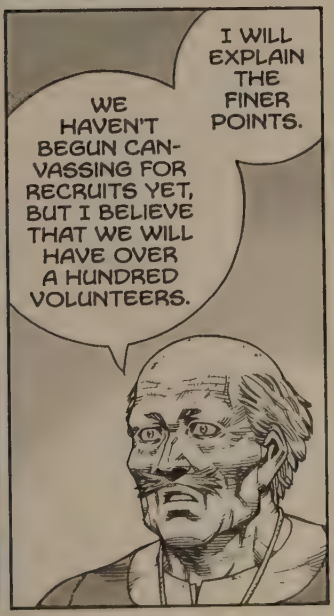
...THAT I NEARLY REPEATED BORR'S MISTAKE.
I CLUNG SO HARD TO MY MISERABLE STRETCH OF SOIL...

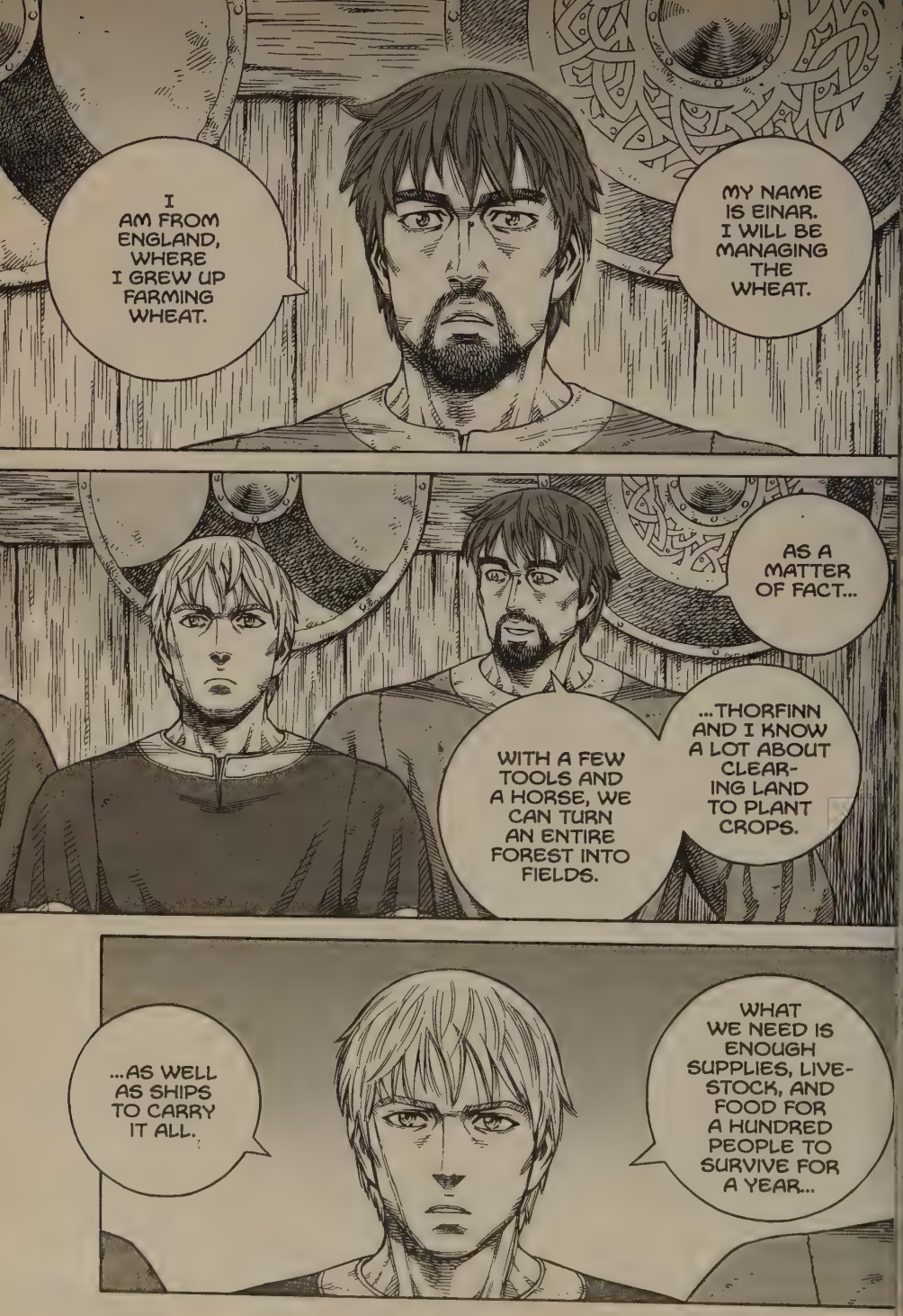
FWISH
VSH
?!
SO WE UNDER-STAND HOW SCARY IT IS TO LOSE YOUR LAND.
FORMERLY FREE BÓNDI AND THEIR SONS.
DON'T WORRY, HAROLD.
EVERYONE HERE IS LIKE YOU.

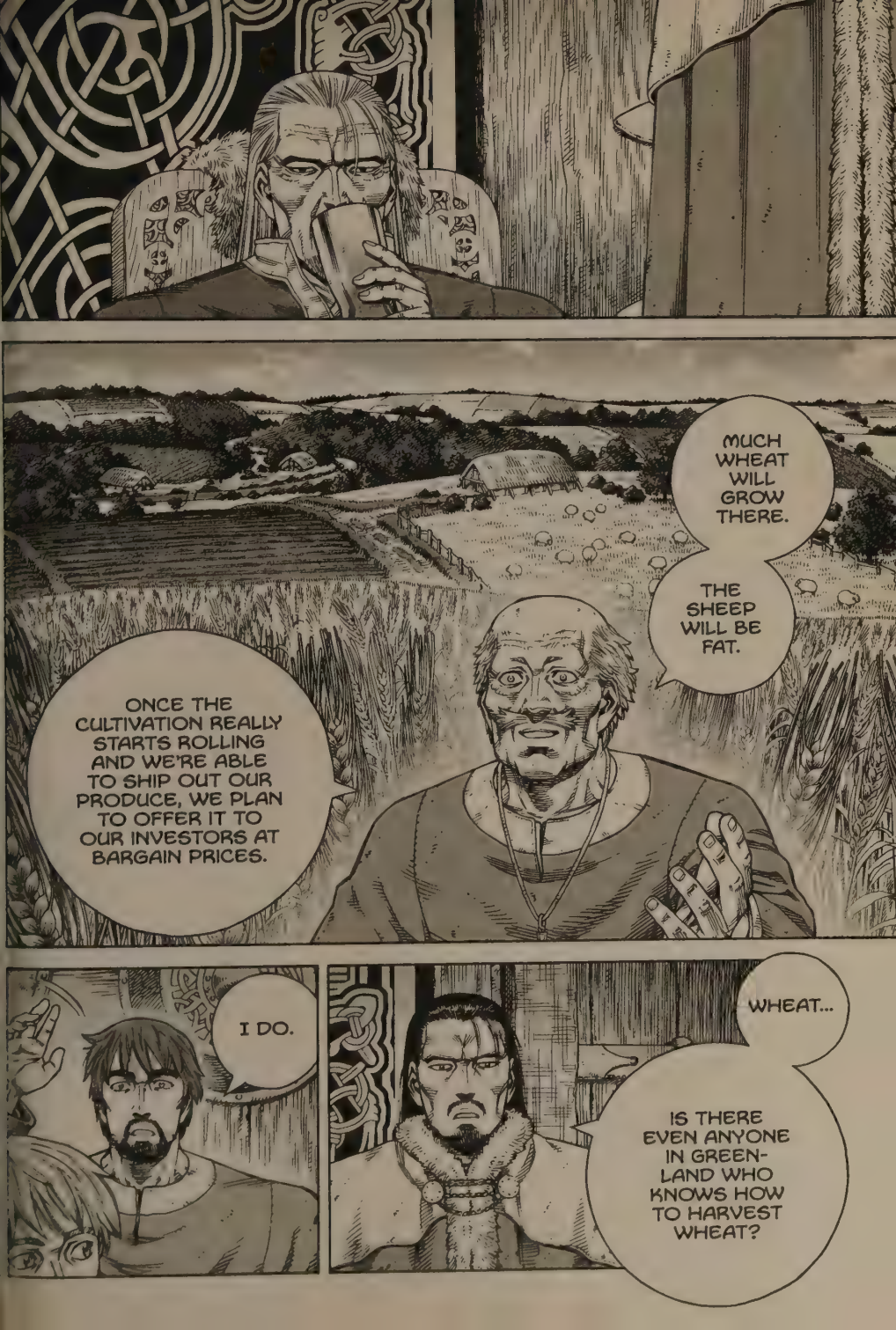

IT IS A TRULY HUGE AND FERTILE PLACE.
I HAVE SEEN IT FOR MYSELF.
IF I HAD TO GUESS... VINLAND SEEMS LESS LIKE AN ISLAND, AND MORE LIKE ANOTHER CONTINENT.
I ONLY SAW A PORTION OF ITS EASTERN COAST, BUT NO MATTER HOW FAR SOUTH WE SAILED, THERE WAS NO END TO IT.

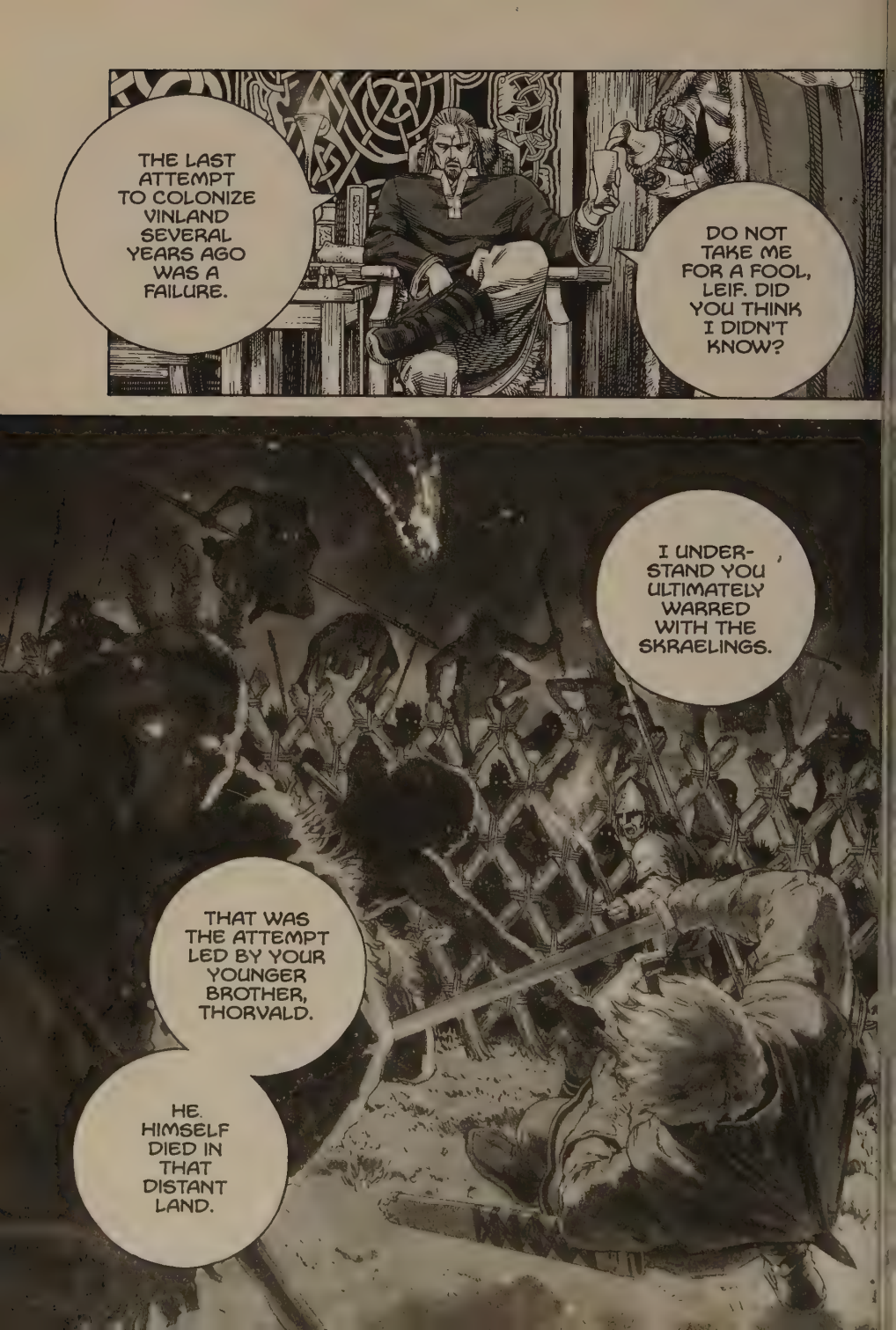
CULTIVATE AND SETTLE VINLAND...

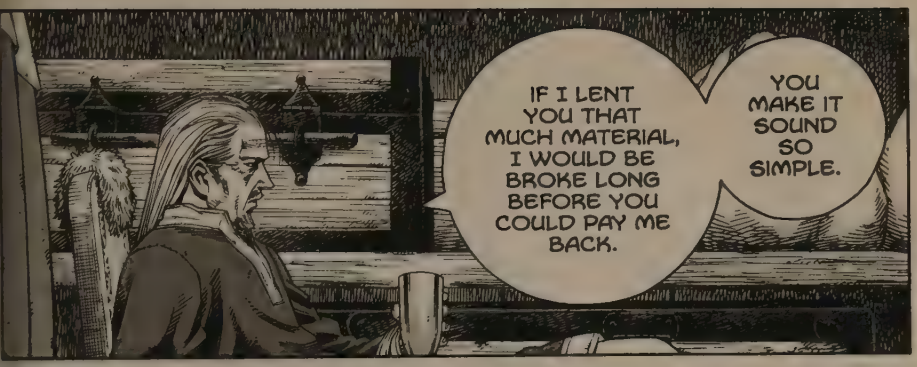
...YOU SAY.

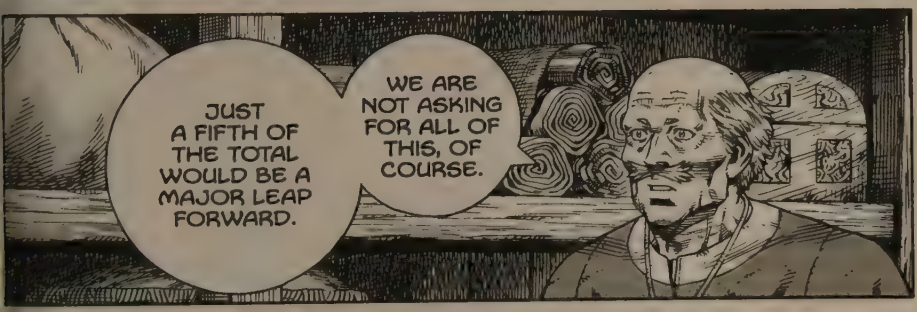


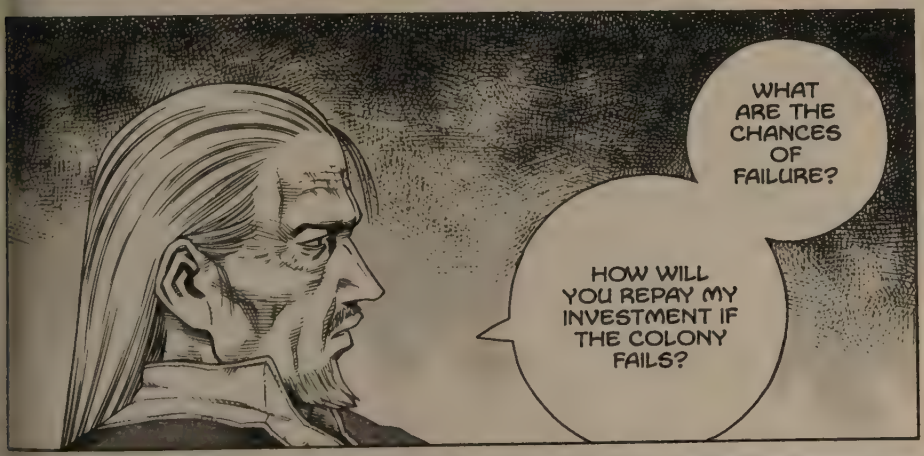

I AM FROM ENGLAND, WHERE I GREW UP FARMING WHEAT.
MY NAME IS EINAR. I WILL BE MANAGING THE WHEAT.
AS A MATTER OF FACT...
...THORFINN AND I KNOW A LOT ABOUT CLEAR-ING LAND TO PLANT CROPS.
WITH A FEW TOOLS AND A HORSE, WE CAN TURN AN ENTIRE FOREST INTO FIELDS.
...AS WELL AS SHIPS TO CARRY IT ALL.
WHAT WE NEED IS ENOUGH SUPPLIES, LIVE-STOCK, AND FOOD FOR A HUNDRED PEOPLE TO SURVIVE FOR A YEAR...

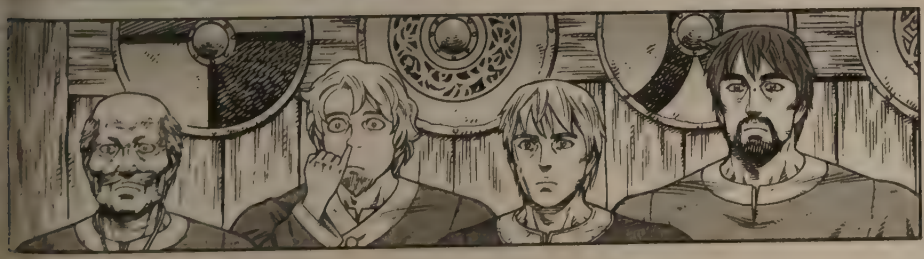

MUCH WHEAT WILL GROW THERE.
THE SHEEP WILL BE FAT.
ONCE THE CULTIVATION REALLY STARTS ROLLING AND WE'RE ABLE TO SHIP OUT OUR PRODUCE, WE PLAN TO OFFER IT TO OUR INVESTORS AT BARGAIN PRICES.
I DO.
WHEAT...
IS THERE EVEN ANYONE IN GREEN-LAND WHO KNOWS HOW TO HARVEST WHEAT?


THE LAST ATTEMPT TO COLONIZE VINLAND SEVERAL YEARS AGO WAS A FAILURE.
DO NOT TAKE ME FOR A FOOL, LEIF. DID YOU THINK I DIDN'T KNOW?
I UNDER-STAND YOU ULTIMATELY WARRED WITH THE SKRAELINGS.
THAT WAS THE ATTEMPT LED BY YOUR YOUNGER BROTHER, THORVALD.
HE. HIMSELF DIED IN THAT DISTANT LAND.


IF I LENT YOU THAT MUCH MATERIAL, I WOULD BE BROKE LONG BEFORE YOU COULD PAY ME BACK.
YOU MAKE IT SOUND SO SIMPLE.


JUST A FIFTH OF THE TOTAL WOULD BE A MAJOR LEAP FORWARD.
WE ARE NOT ASKING FOR ALL OF THIS, OF COURSE.


WHAT ARE THE CHANCES OF FAILURE?
HOW WILL YOU REPAY MY INVESTMENT IF THE COLONY FAILS?



BUT I AM CONFIDENT...

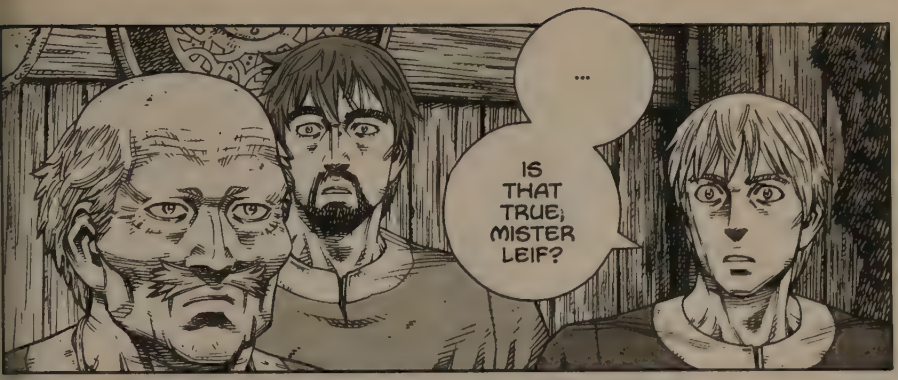
...THAT IF *YOU* LEAD THE SETTLEMENT, THORFINN, IT WOULD NOT TURN OUT THAT WAY.

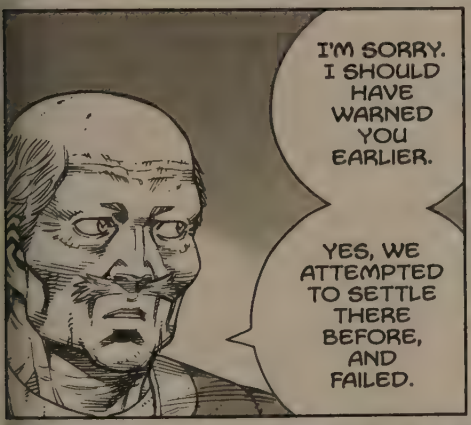
...

THAT WILL MAKE YOU THE DEBTOR IN THIS CASE.

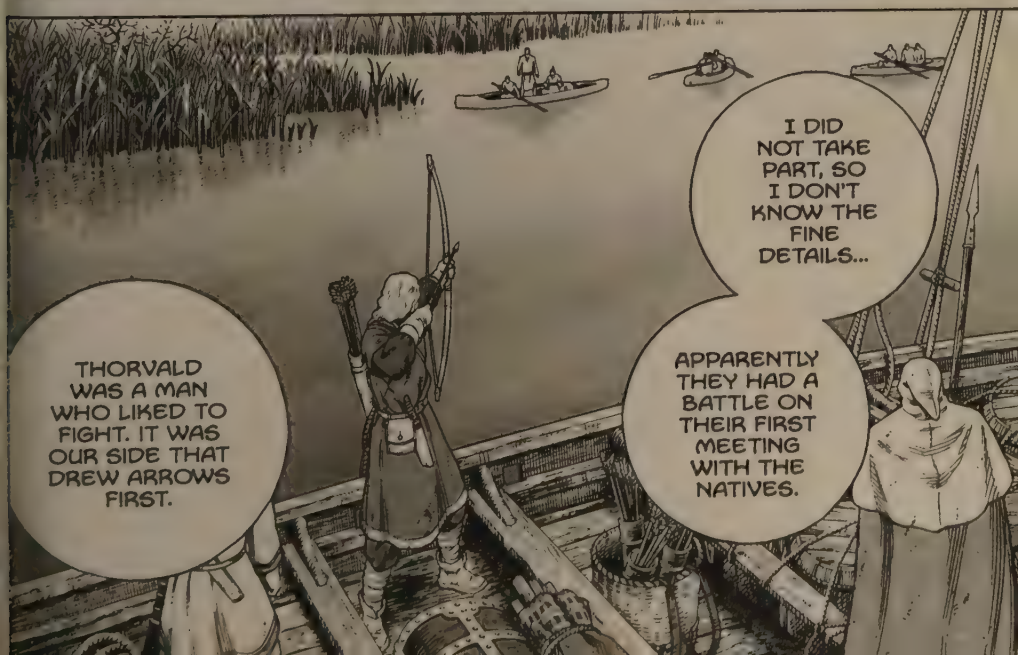
ARE YOU THE LEADER...

...THORFINN, SON OF THORS?


...
IS THAT TRUE, MISTER LEIF?

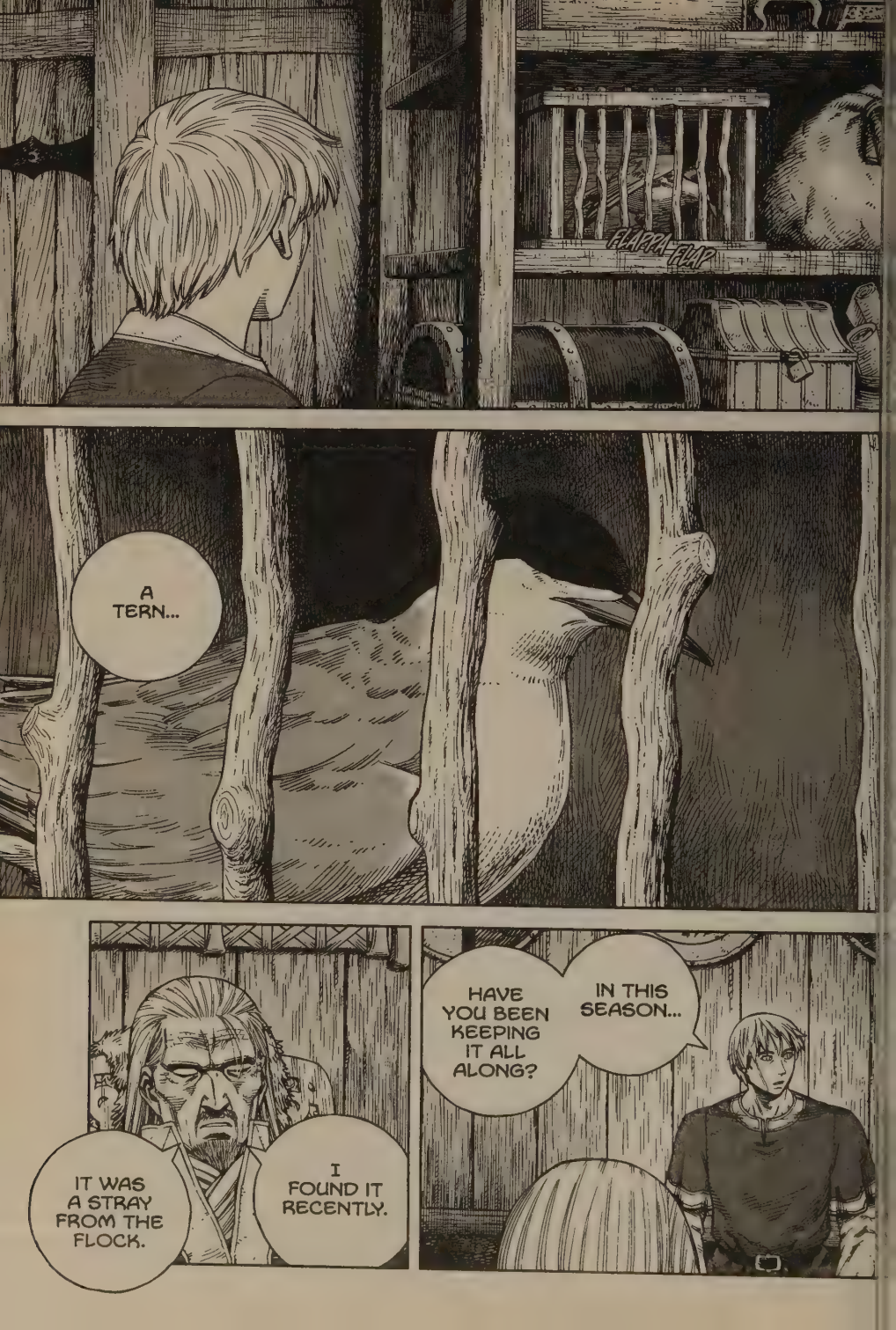

I'M SORRY. I SHOULD HAVE WARNED YOU EARLIER.
YES, WE ATTEMPTED TO SETTLE THERE BEFORE, AND FAILED.

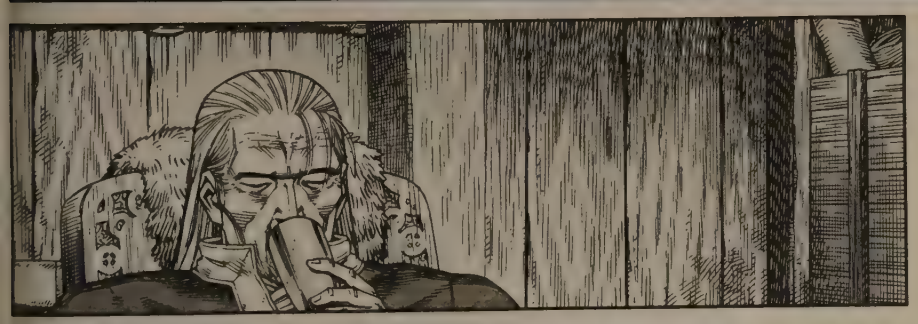
YOU DIDN'T TELL HIM?
THAT'S NOT VERY FAIR.


I DID NOT TAKE PART, SO I DON'T KNOW THE FINE DETAILS...
THORVALD WAS A MAN WHO LIKED TO FIGHT. IT WAS OUR SIDE THAT DREW ARROWS FIRST.
APPARENTLY THEY HAD A BATTLE ON THEIR FIRST MEETING WITH THE NATIVES.

CHAPTER 105: THE FETTERED TERN (5)

I WILL NEGOTIATE WITH THE BORROWER ONE-ON-ONE.
EVERYONE ASIDE FROM THORFINN, LEAVE US NOW.

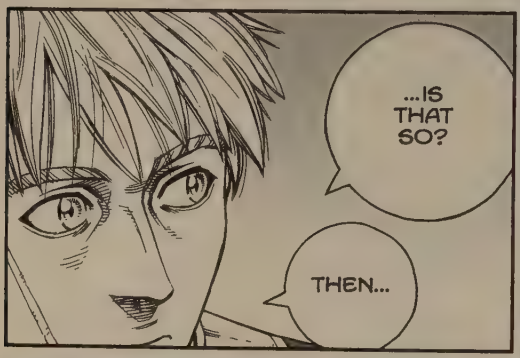

FLAPPA FLAP
A TERN...
IT WAS A STRAY FROM THE FLOCK.
I FOUND IT RECENTLY.
HAVE YOU BEEN KEEPING IT ALL ALONG?
IN THIS SEASON...

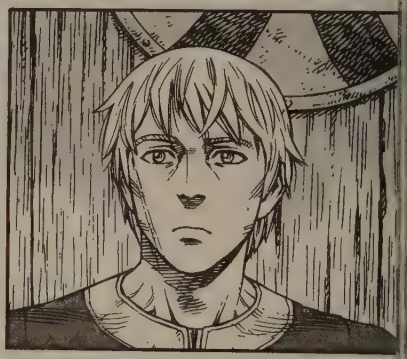


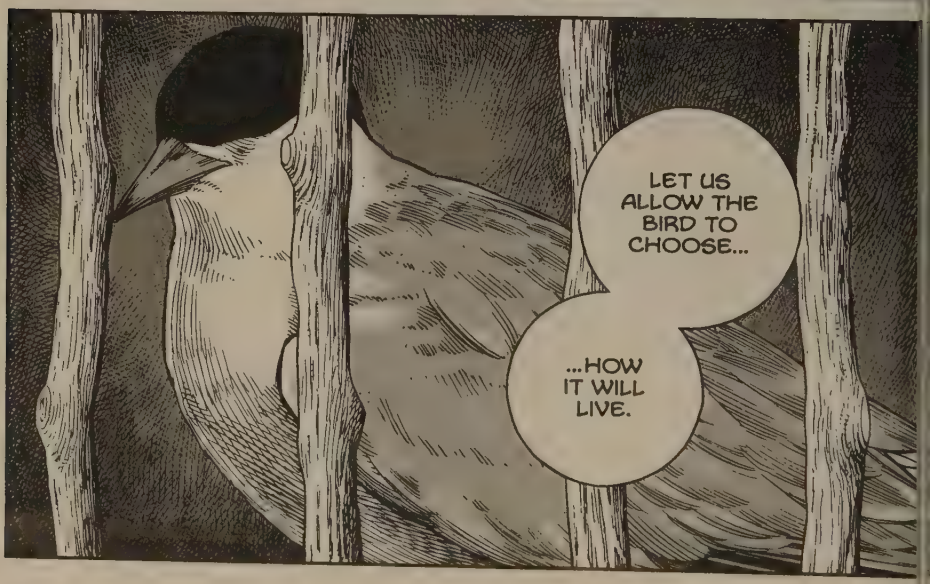
.....

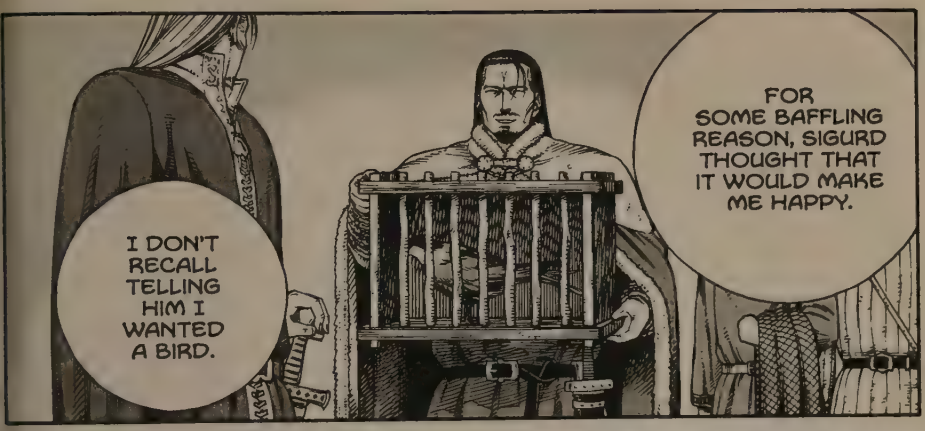
...
SCRITCH
SCRATCH

RELEASE IT, AND IT WILL SUFFER A MISERABLE DEATH OF FREEZING AND STARVATION.
IT WILL NOT LAST LONG IF YOU DO.
IT IS HERE BECAUSE IT IS WEAK, AND COULDN'T CROSS THE SEA.

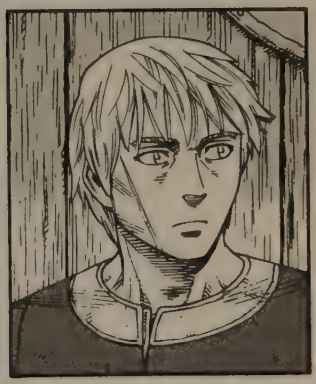

...IS THAT SO?
THEN...

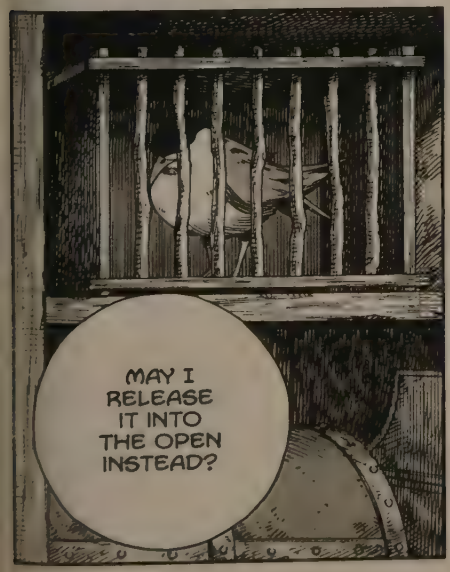


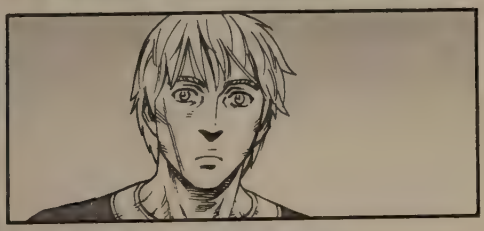

LET US ALLOW THE BIRD TO CHOOSE...
...HOW IT WILL LIVE.


I DON'T RECALL TELLING HIM I WANTED A BIRD.
FOR SOME BAFFLING REASON, SIGURD THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD MAKE ME HAPPY.

IF YOU WANT TO EAT IT, IT'S YOURS.
IT'S SCRAWNY AND TOUGH, I'VE NO DOUBT.




MAY I RELEASE IT INTO THE OPEN INSTEAD?



IS THAT SO?
WELL, ER...
I DON'T WANT TO EAT IT...

FW ISH

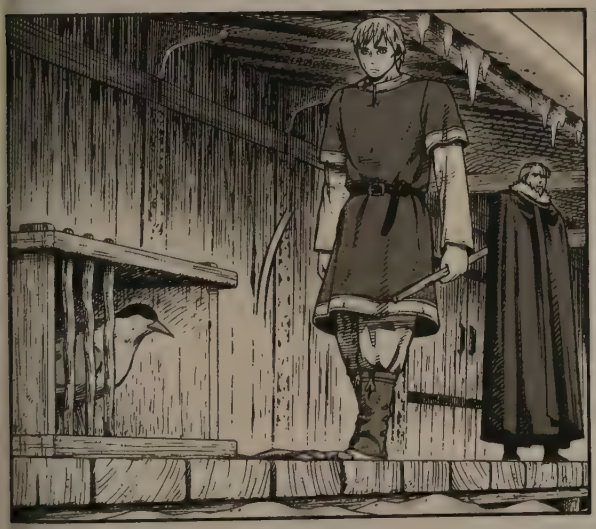
WOBBLE

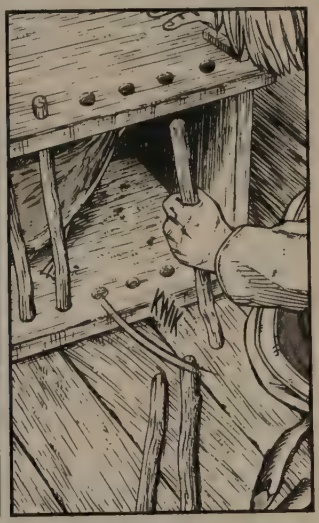
WOBBLE

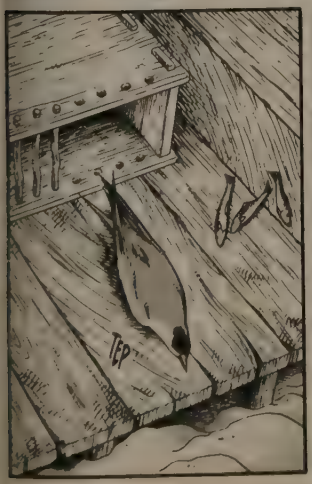
...HMPH.

...

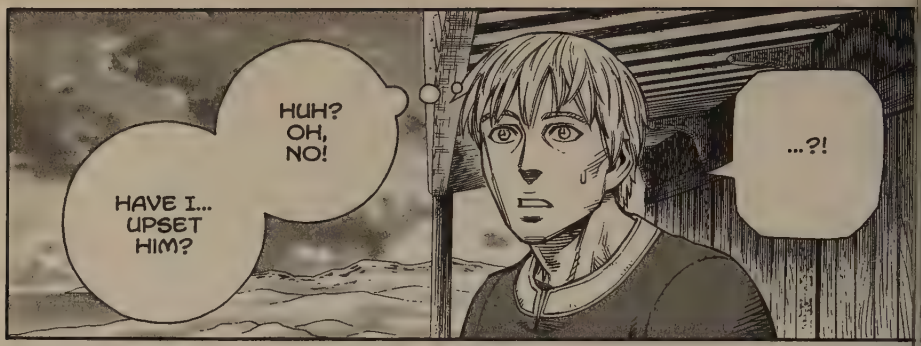
IT DIDN'T SPARE A GLANCE FOR THE FOOD.

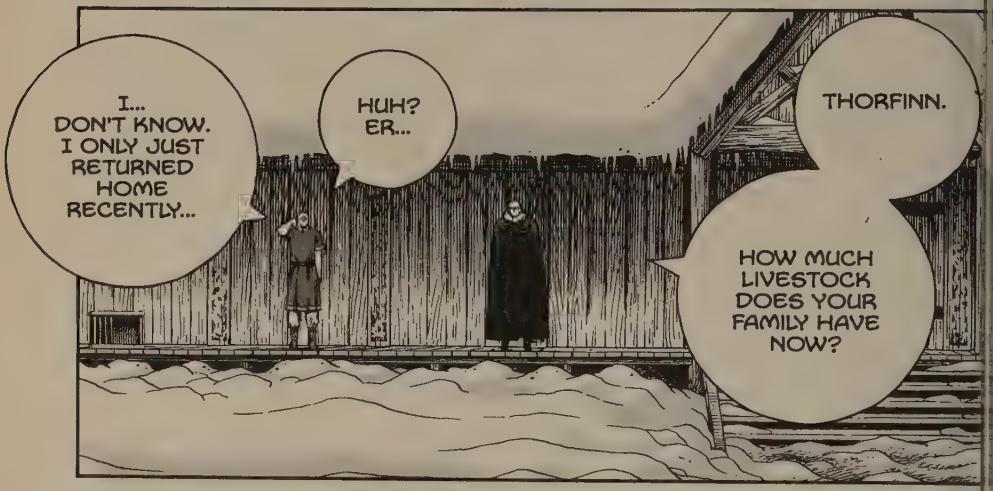



KWIK


TEP

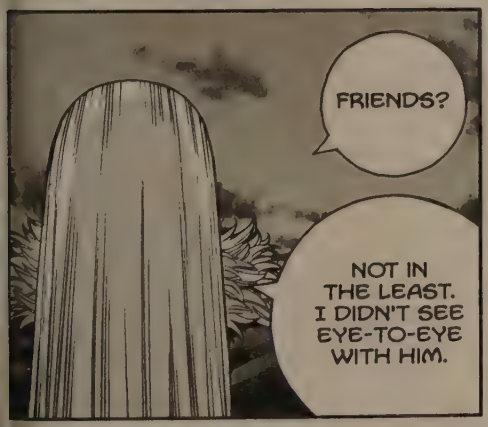
KUK
KUK

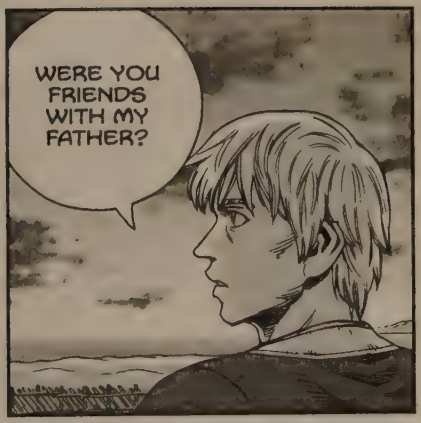

HUH? OH, NO!
HAVE I... UPSET HIM?
...?!

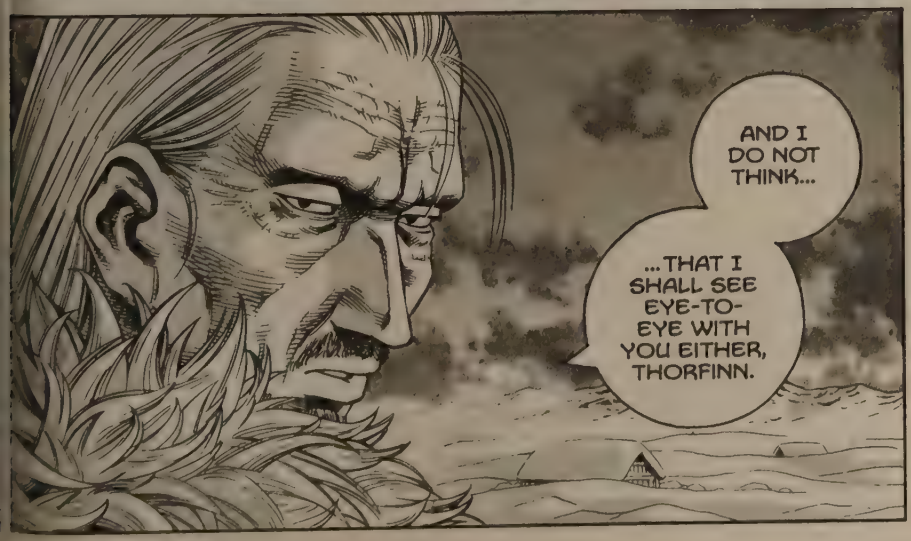

I... DON'T KNOW. I ONLY JUST RETURNED HOME RECENTLY...
HUH? ER...
THORFINN.
HOW MUCH LIVESTOCK DOES YOUR FAMILY HAVE NOW?

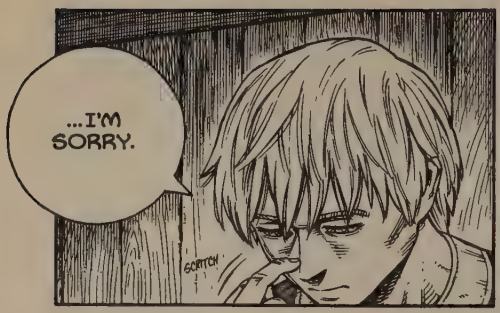
IF YOUR EXPEDITION FAILS, I WILL RECOUP MY INVESTMENT FROM THEM.
I WILL LEND YOU ONLY ENOUGH MONEY TO MATCH WHAT YOUR FAMILY OWNS.

I CAN SEE THAT YOU'RE THORS'S SON, INDEED.
SLY YOUNG MAN.

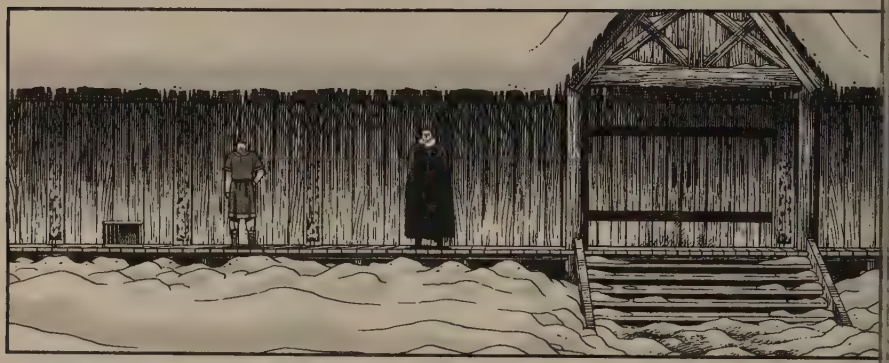

FRIENDS?
NOT IN THE LEAST. I DIDN'T SEE EYE-TO-EYE WITH HIM.


WERE YOU FRIENDS WITH MY FATHER?


AND I DO NOT THINK...
...THAT I SHALL SEE EYE-TO-EYE WITH YOU EITHER, THORFINN.


...I'M SORRY.
SCRITCH

...THIS IS GETTING US NO-WHERE.



I DON'T NEED YOUR LIFE.
WHY NOT OFFER UP YOUR PRIDE INSTEAD?

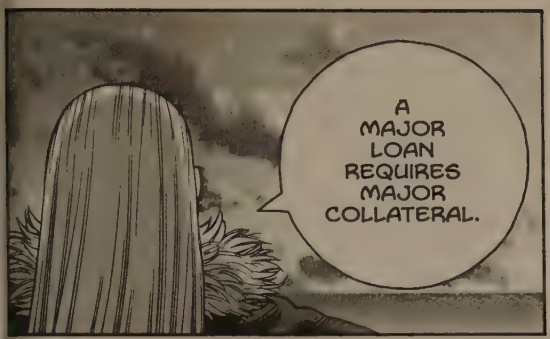
THEN WHAT ELSE DO YOU HAVE?

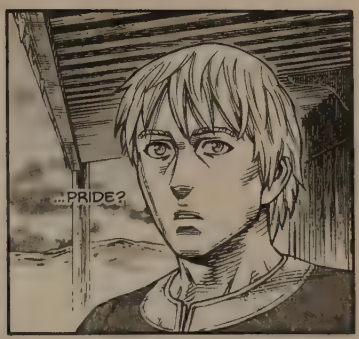
I CANNOT MAKE THAT DEAL.
WELL... MY FAMILY'S POSSESSIONS ARE NOT MY POSSESSIONS.
HUH?

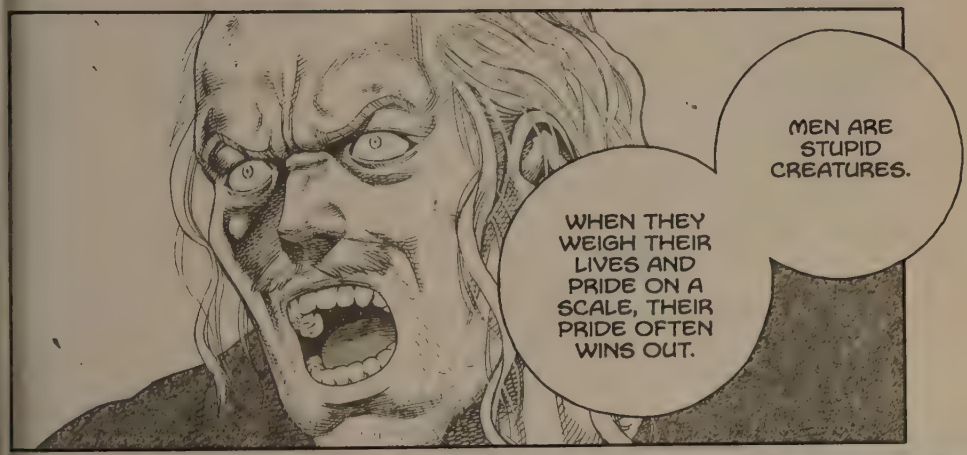
I WILL ONLY LEND YOU WHAT YOU CAN OFFER AS COLLATERAL.
LAND, SHIPS, WEAPONS, SILVER, ANYTHING...

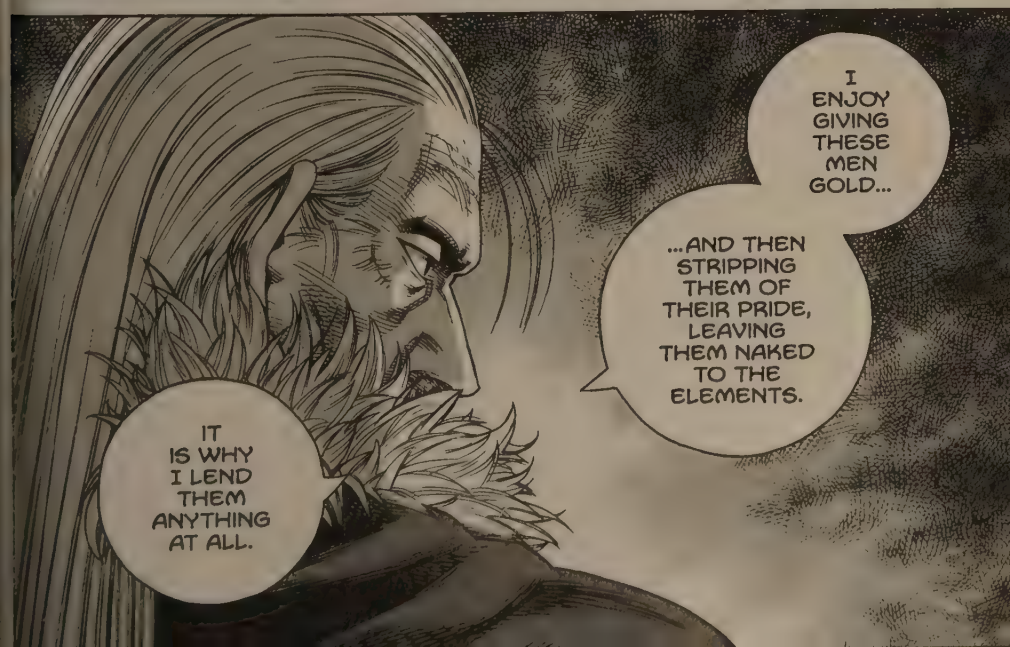
...I HAVE NOTHING.
ONLY MY LIFE.

THEN WHAT...
...SHOULD I DO?
...
KISS MY BOOT.
ONLY THEN WILL I CONSIDER INVESTING IN YOUR PLAN.


A MAJOR LOAN REQUIRES MAJOR COLLATERAL.


...PRIDE?

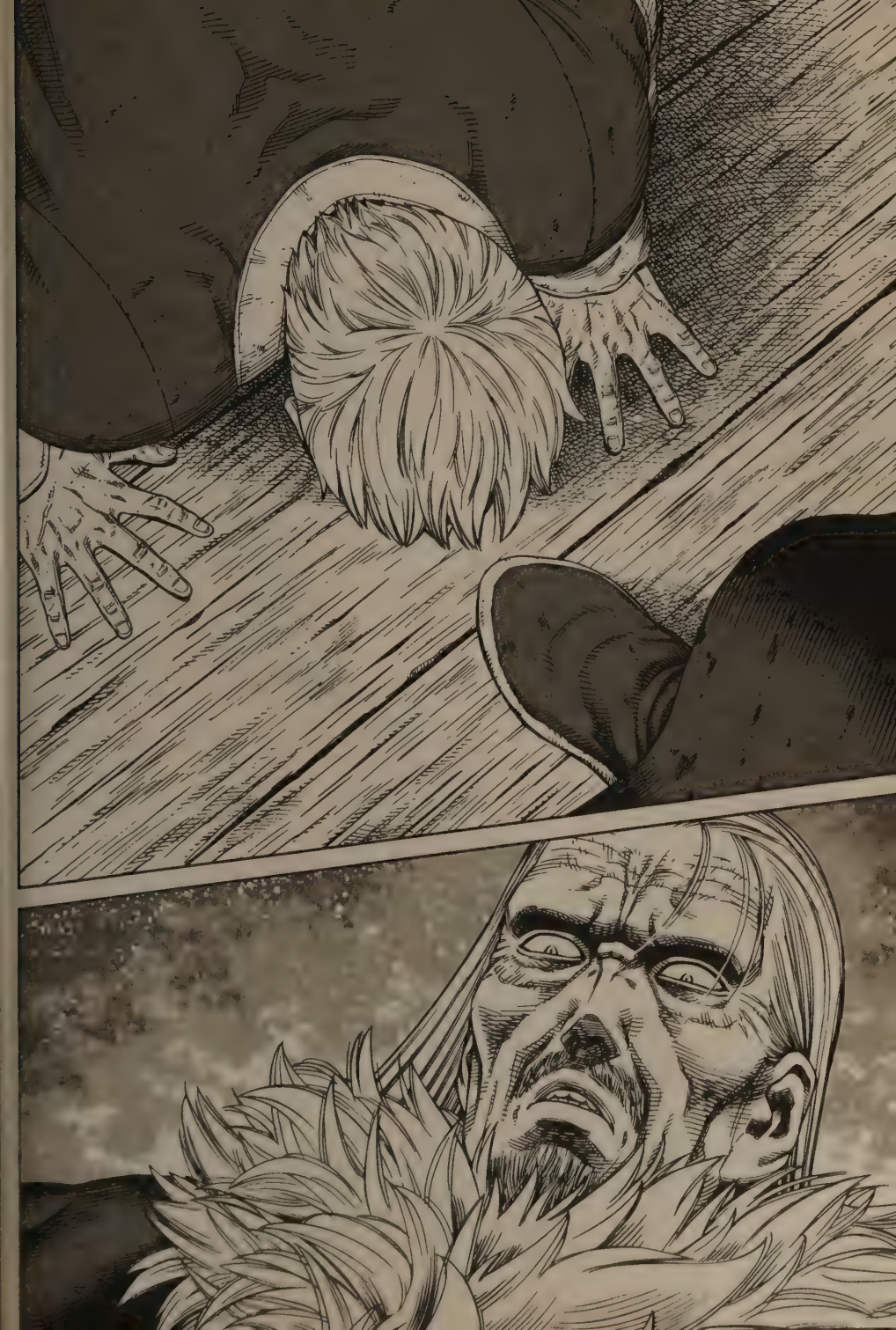

MEN ARE STUPID CREATURES.
WHEN THEY WEIGH THEIR LIVES AND PRIDE ON A SCALE, THEIR PRIDE OFTEN WINS OUT.


I ENJOY GIVING THESE MEN GOLD...
...AND THEN STRIPPING THEM OF THEIR PRIDE, LEAVING THEM NAKED TO THE ELEMENTS.
IT IS WHY I LEND THEM ANYTHING AT ALL.

FROM THE WAY YOU WERE SPEAKING, I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO DEMAND A LIMB OR TWO...
WOW, I WAS REALLY NERVOUS THERE!
AH, YES, OF COURSE!
I WILL, I WILL!
...WILL YOU DO IT?
RIGHT HERE AND NOW.
OH, I'M SO RELIEVED. EINAR WILL BE THRILLED.
THE RIGHT OR THE LEFT?
OR BOTH?

...HMM?
UH... WHAT?!
THAT'S ALL?

WUSH
...
I WAS JOKING.
?
OH... I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN.
WHAT?!
...



YOU WERE GOING TO KISS HIS BOOT? I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.

IF HE ASKED YOU TO EAT HORSE-SHIT, WOULD YOU HAVE DONE THAT, TOO?

MMF

IT'S A CHEAP PRICE TO PAY.

I WOULD.

THEY'RE SEEING TO THE STAR-BOARD REPAIR FROM WHAT SIGURD SMASHED EARLIER.

HE'S OVER AT THE SHIP-WRIGHT'S.

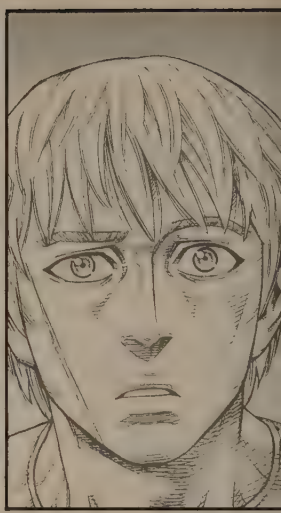
WHERE IS LEIF, BY THE WAY?

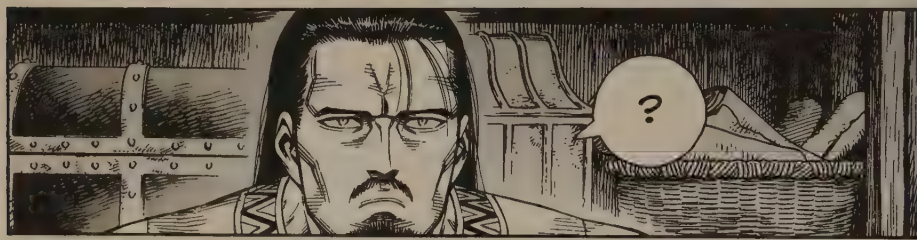
...OH.

WELL, ENJOY.

THE DEAL FELL THROUGH.
I'M SORRY.
IF THEY SAY THE SAME THING EVERY-WHERE WE GO, WE'VE GOT NO MORE MOVES TO PLAY.
THIS IS GOING TO BE A PROBLEM.
WELL, WE'VE GOT NOTHING TO OUR NAMES...
SO HE WANTS COL-LATERAL...

HMPH...
HE TRULY HAS NOTHING ELSE BUT HIS LIFE.

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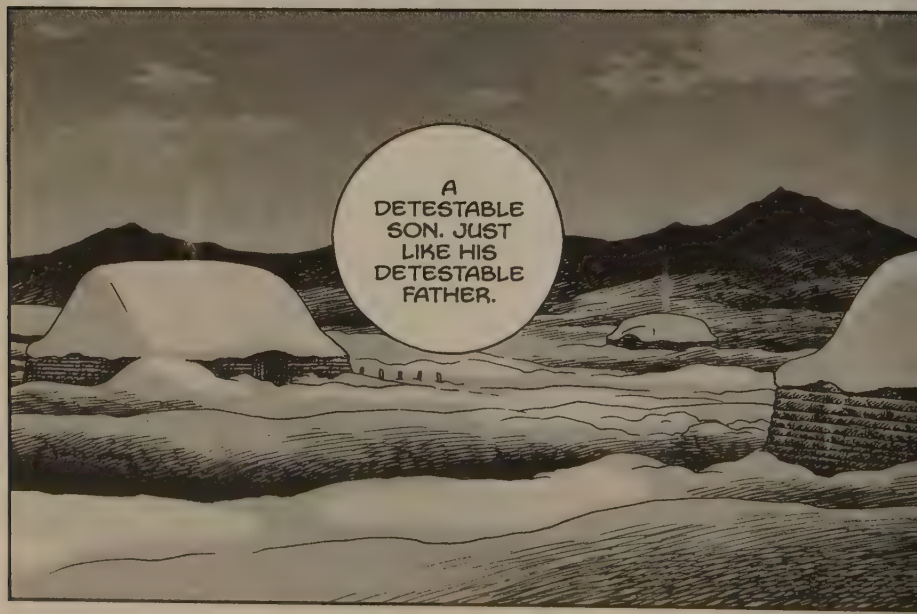
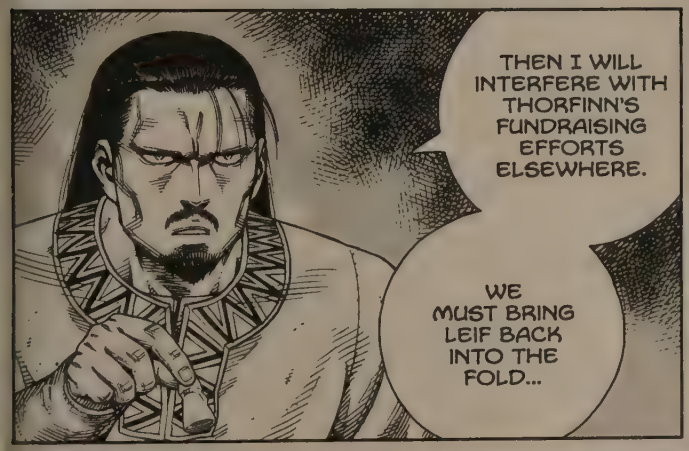
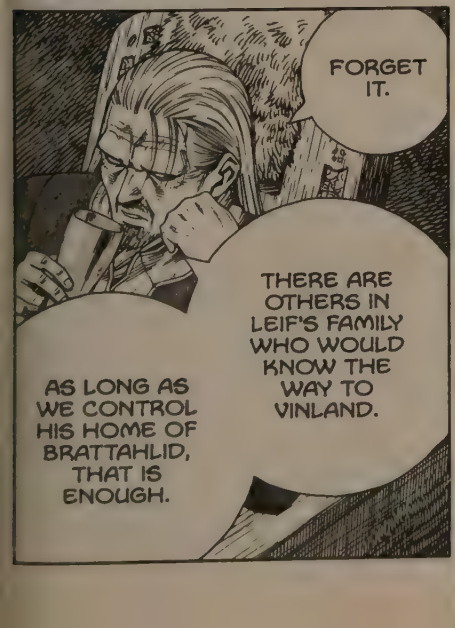
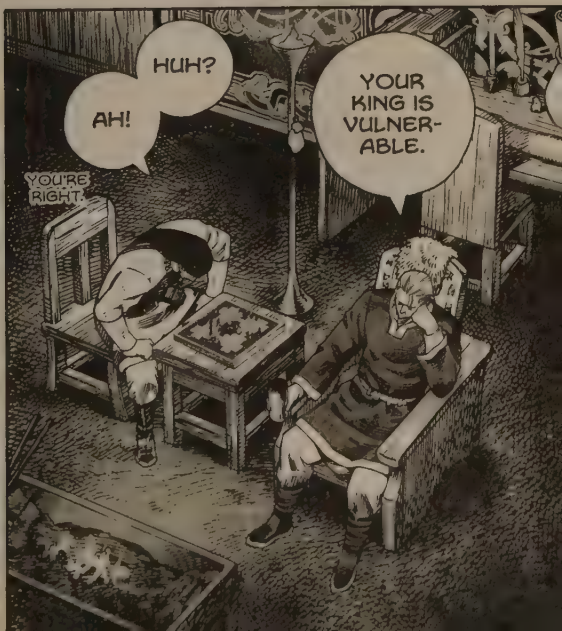

A DETESTABLE SON. JUST LIKE HIS DETESTABLE FATHER.

SO, RATHER THAN FUND THEM AND BRING THEM IN...
...YOU CHOSE TO DESTROY THEM, FATHER.

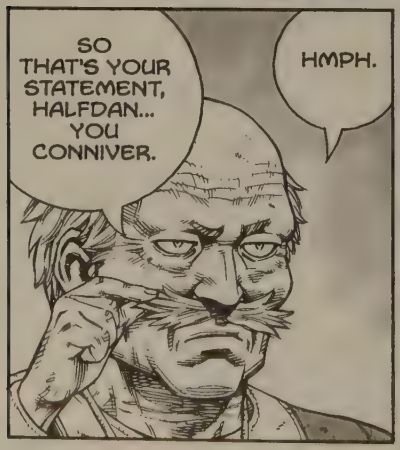

THEN I WILL INTERFERE WITH THORFINN'S FUNDRAISING EFFORTS ELSEWHERE.
WE MUST BRING LEIF BACK INTO THE FOLD...

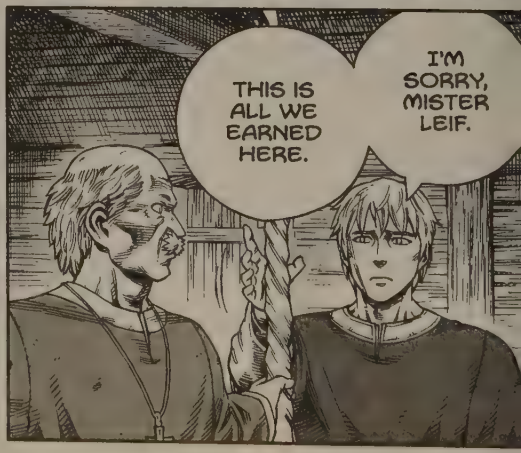

FORGET IT.
THERE ARE OTHERS IN LEIF'S FAMILY WHO WOULD KNOW THE WAY TO VINLAND.
AS LONG AS WE CONTROL HIS HOME OF BRATTAHLID, THAT IS ENOUGH.


HUH?
AH!
YOU'RE RIGHT.
YOUR KING IS VULNER-ABLE.

I CANNOT LEND YOU MONEY, BUT I CAN GIVE YOU SOMETHING AS THANKS FOR JOINING OUR CELEBRATION.
YOU WILL ATTEND MY SON'S WEDDING.
...HE SAID.

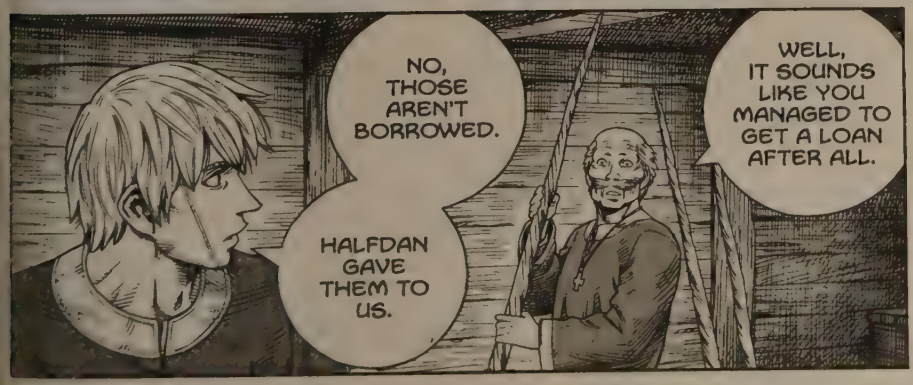
IT'S KIND OF LIKE A WHALE.
WHAT'S A NARWHAL? IS IT LIKE A DEER?
THEY'RE REASONABLY COMMON AROUND HERE, AND THEIR HORNS ARE USED FOR HANDICRAFT.


SO THAT'S YOUR STATEMENT, HALFDAN... YOU CONNIVER.
HMPH.

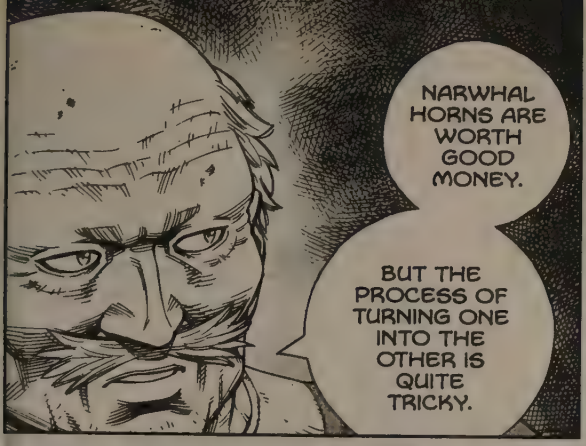

THIS IS ALL WE EARNED HERE.
I'M SORRY, MISTER LEIF.

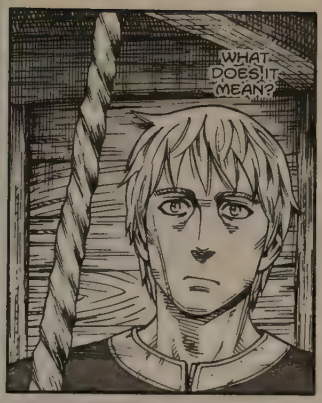
OOH...

TWENTY-FOUR NARWHAL HORNS.


NO, THOSE AREN'T BORROWED.
HALFDAN GAVE THEM TO US.
WELL, IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU MANAGED TO GET A LOAN AFTER ALL.

CHAPTER 106: THE FETTERED TERN (6)





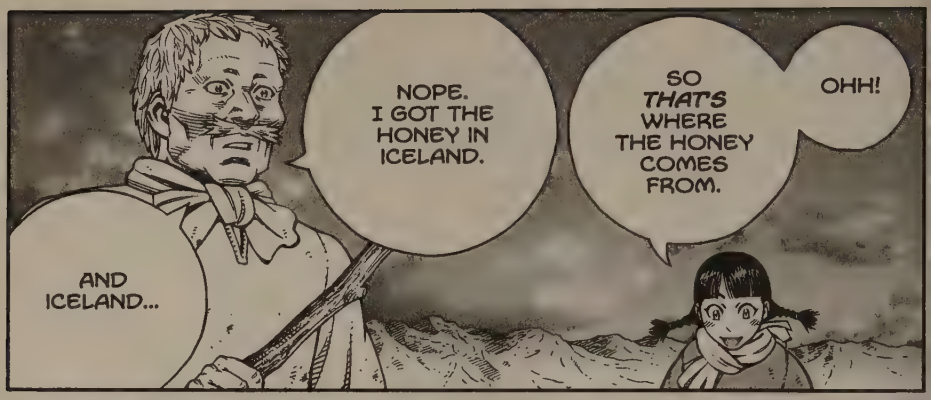
THIS IS A CHALLENGE FROM HALFDAN, THORFINN.

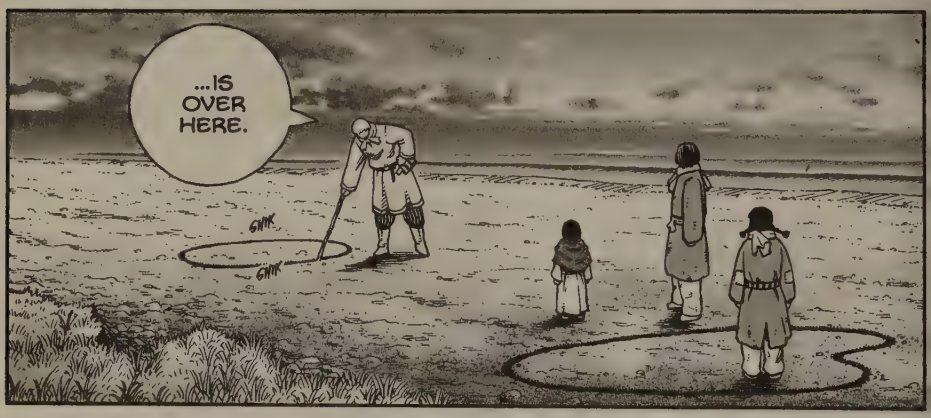
HE'S TESTING YOU.

HE WANTS TO KNOW HOW SERIOUS YOU ARE ABOUT GOING TO VINLAND...

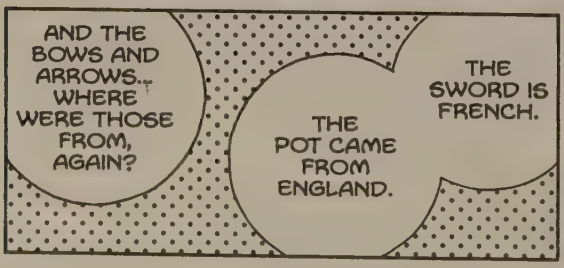
...SHIPS WOULD COME FROM BEYOND THE WORLD.
BUT NOW AND THEN...
I BELIEVE THIS IS ALL THAT YOU REQUESTED.
PLEASE, TAKE YOUR TIME HERE.
IT'S A GREAT BOON, LEIF.

I WAS BORN IN A SMALL VIK.
AS FAR AS I KNEW, THAT WAS THE ENTIRE WORLD.
THERE WAS DAD, MOM, MY SIBLINGS, SHEEP, AND HOME.

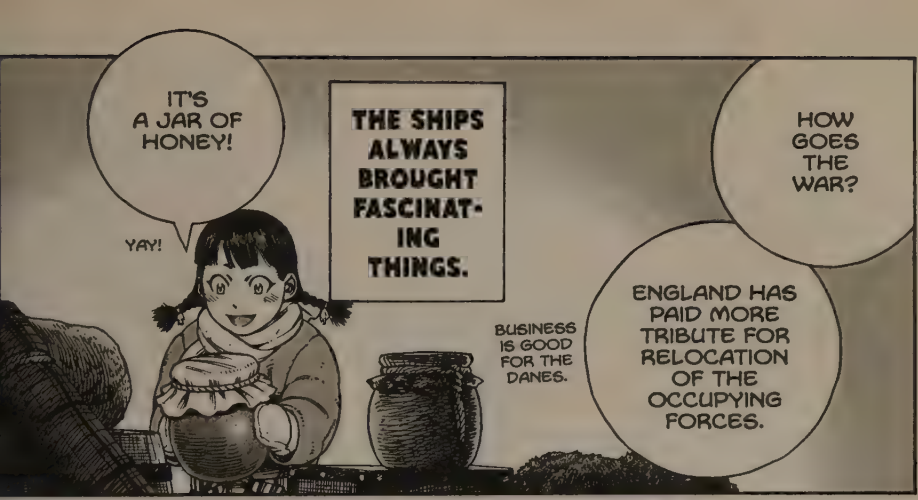

AND ICELAND...
NOPE. I GOT THE HONEY IN ICELAND.
SO *THAT'S* WHERE THE HONEY COMES FROM.
OHH!

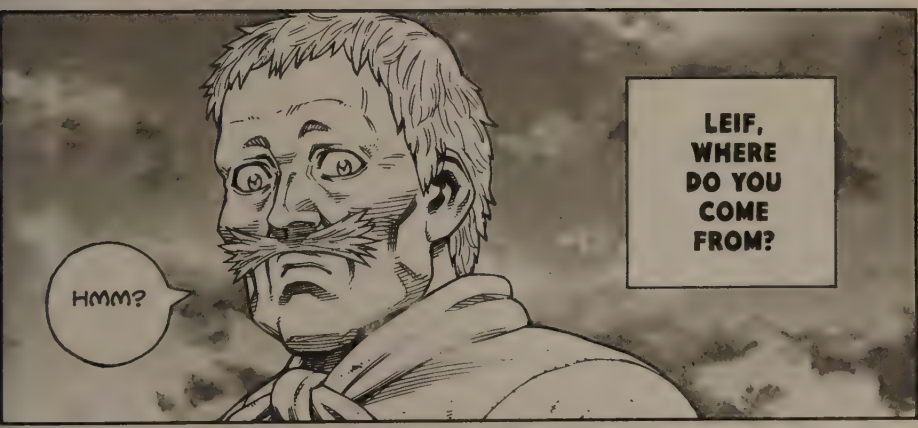

...IS OVER HERE.
GNK
GNK

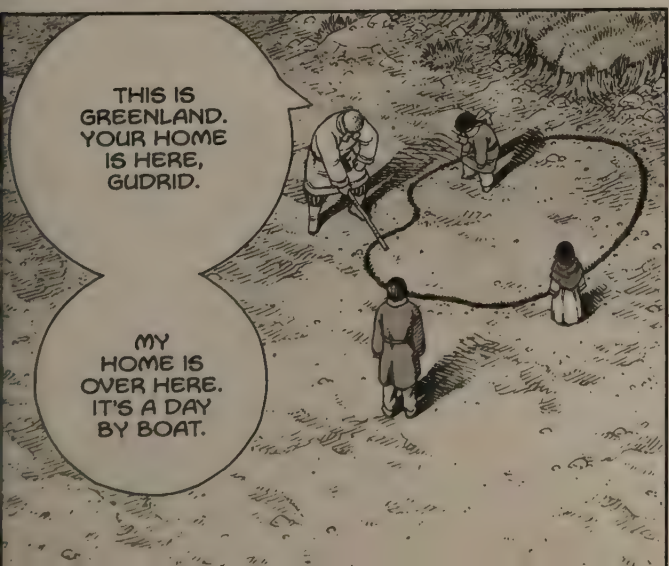
THAT'S, UM, AROUND HERE.
THE WINE'S FROM GERMANY.
WHAT ABOUT THE WINE?


AND THE BOWS AND ARROWS... WHERE WERE THOSE FROM, AGAIN?
THE POT CAME FROM ENGLAND.
THE SWORD IS FRENCH.

THAT'S FURTHER EAST.
WHERE IT ACTUALLY CAME FROM IS ANOTHER PLACE CALLED NORWAY.
ZSH

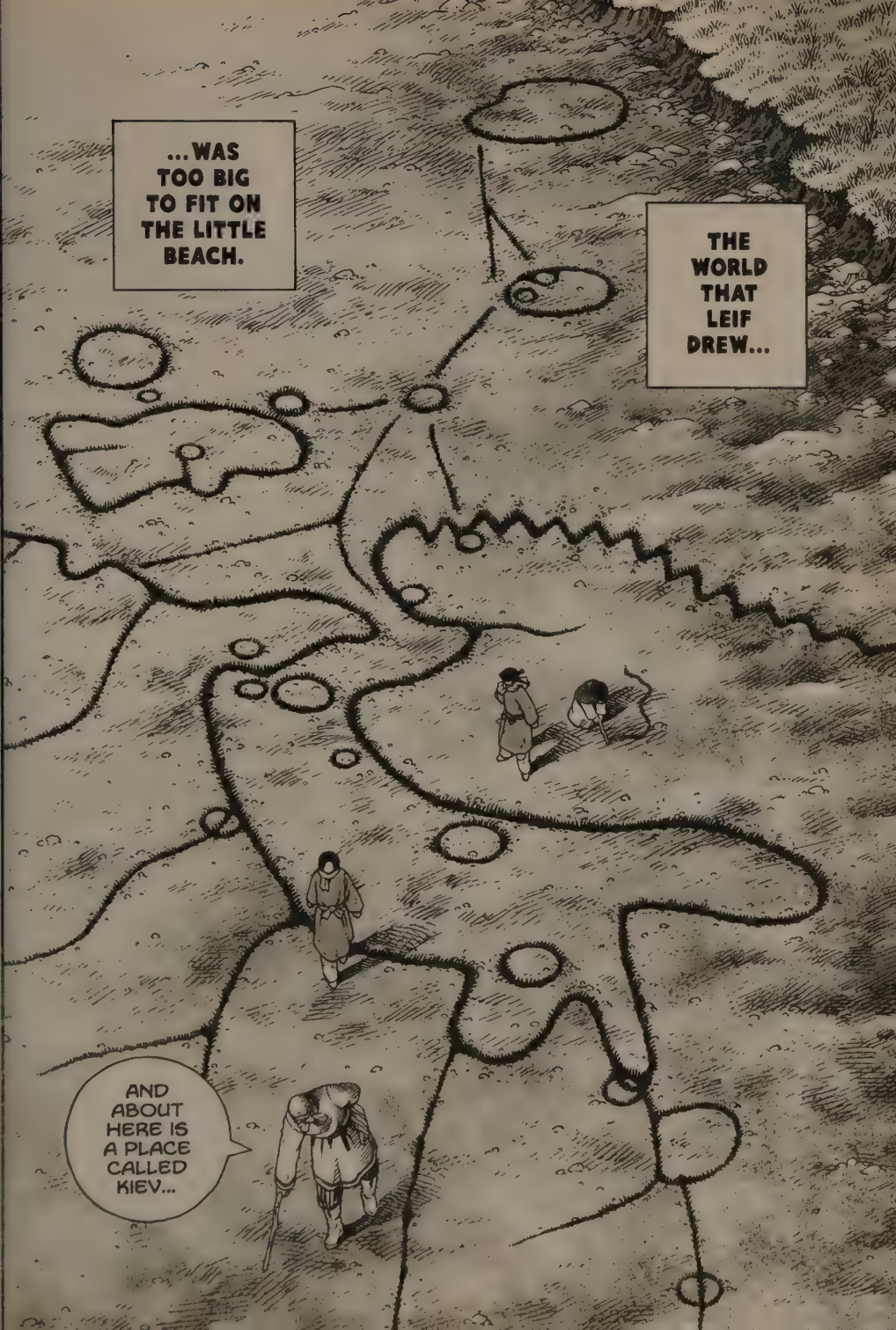

IT'S A JAR OF HONEY!
YAY!
THE SHIPS ALWAYS BROUGHT FASCINATING THINGS.
BUSINESS IS GOOD FOR THE DANES.
HOW GOES THE WAR?
ENGLAND HAS PAID MORE TRIBUTE FOR RELOCATION OF THE OCCUPYING FORCES.


HMM?
LEIF, WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?


THIS IS GREENLAND. YOUR HOME IS HERE, GUDRID.
MY HOME IS OVER HERE. IT'S A DAY BY BOAT.

SHIK
SHIK

THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION.
NO, THERE'S MORE.
MUCH FURTHER TO THE WEST.
IS GREENLAND ALL THE WAY AT THE VERY WEST?
IT'S ALL EAST, EAST, EAST.
THAT'S VINLAND.
SHHK


...WAS TOO BIG TO FIT ON THE LITTLE BEACH.
THE WORLD THAT LEIF DREW...
AND ABOUT HERE IS A PLACE CALLED KIEV...

AND YET...

WHAP

MURMUR...

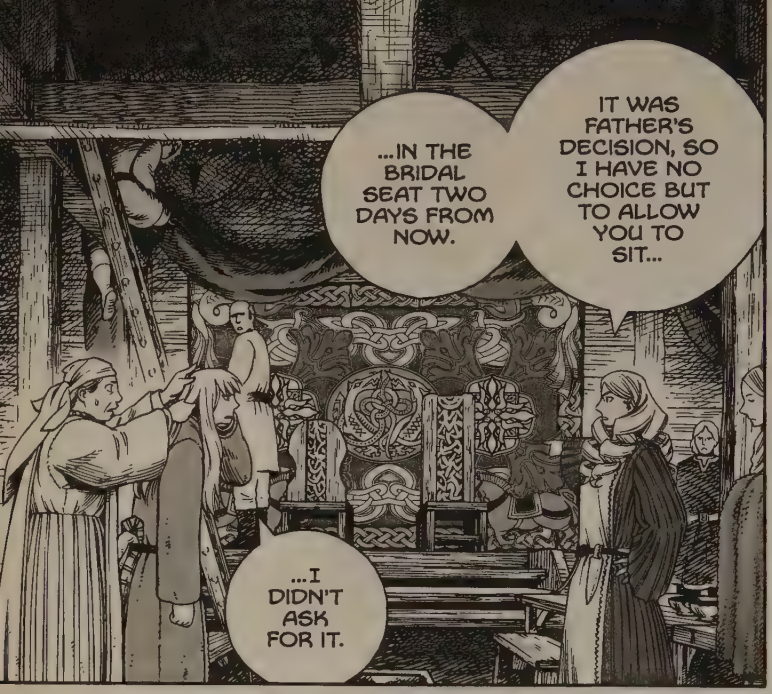
EEK!

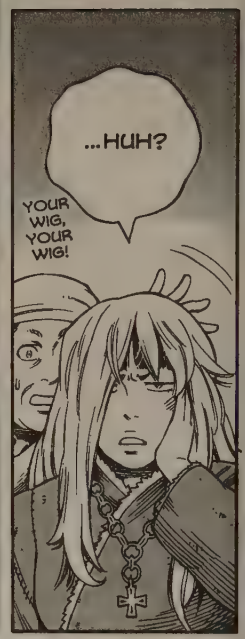
OWWW!!

YOU'RE GETTING OFF WITH JUST A SINGLE SLAP.

YOU SHOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR MY MERCY.

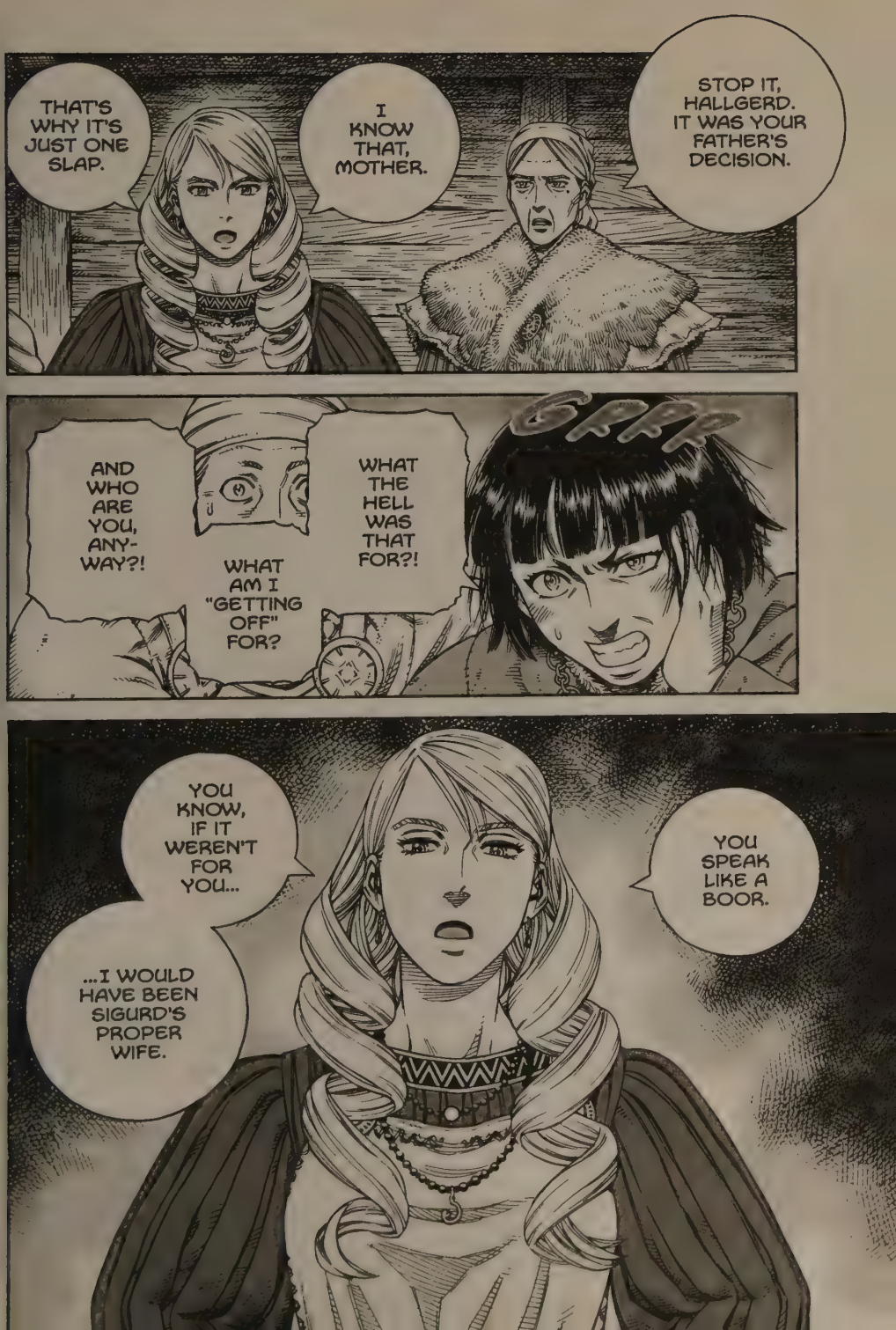
IT SET MY HEART RACING.
THAT WHOLE DAY, I GAZED AT THE WORLD LEIF DEPICTED.
THE WORLD IS VAST.
THE WORLD...


...IN THE BRIDAL SEAT TWO DAYS FROM NOW.
IT WAS FATHER'S DECISION, SO I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO ALLOW YOU TO SIT...
...I DIDN'T ASK FOR IT.


...HUH?
YOUR WIG, YOUR WIG!

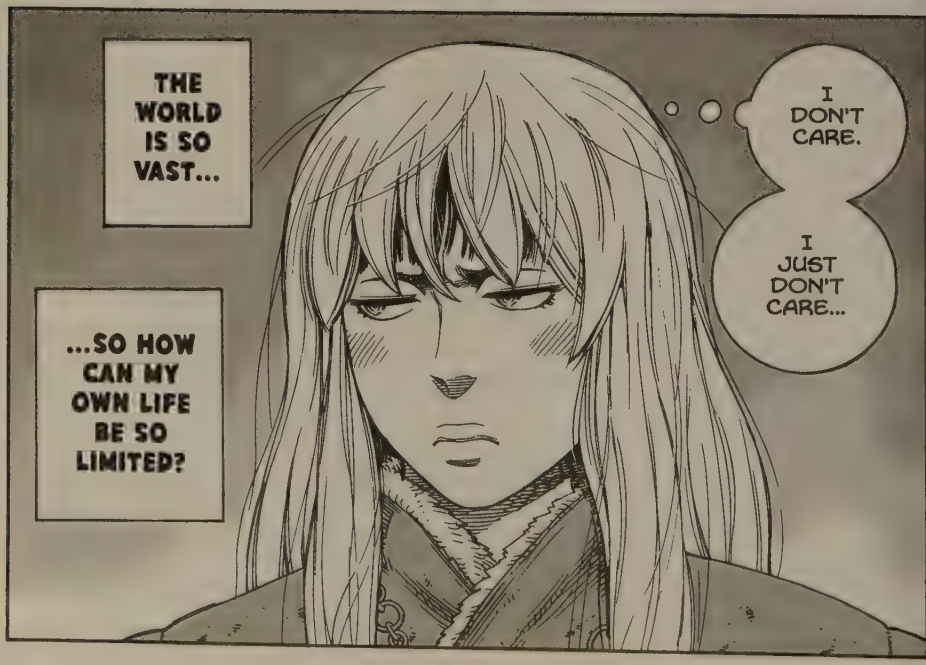
THAT HAIR OF YOURS...
PFFT...
NOW I AM GLAD THAT I DID, GUDRID.
I WASN'T SURE IF I OUGHT TO MEET YOU OR NOT.

OHHHH HOH HOH HOH HOH
SO IT WAS A WIG ALL ALONG!
FWOOSH


THAT'S WHY IT'S JUST ONE SLAP.
I KNOW THAT, MOTHER.
STOP IT, HALLGERD. IT WAS YOUR FATHER'S DECISION.
GRRR
AND WHO ARE YOU, ANY-WAY?!
WHAT AM I "GETTING OFF" FOR?
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT FOR?!
YOU KNOW, IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU...
...I WOULD HAVE BEEN SIGURD'S PROPER WIFE.
YOU SPEAK LIKE A BOOR.

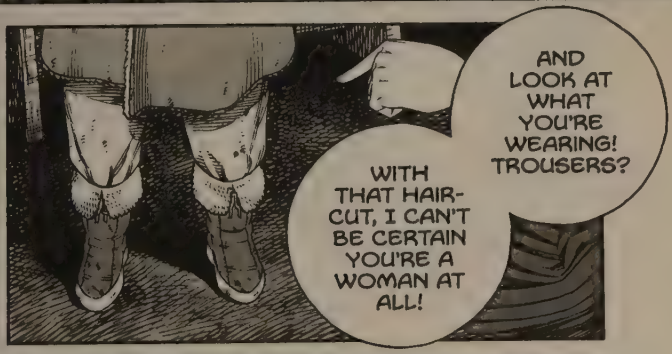
OH...
SIGURD'S SECOND WIFE, IF YOU WILL.
HIS MISTRESS.
I AM SORRY FOR THAT, GUDRID.
SHE IS... WELL...

SHE CAN BE GOOD-NATURED... IN HER OWN WAY.
SHE HAS KNOWN MY SON FOR MANY YEARS...
TRY TO UNDER-STAND HER SIDE IN THIS.


THE WORLD IS SO VAST...
...SO HOW CAN MY OWN LIFE BE SO LIMITED?
I DON'T CARE.
I JUST DON'T CARE...

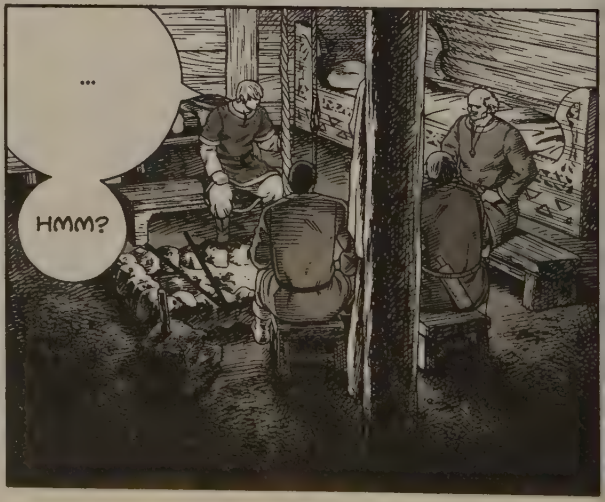
...IN EVERY IMAGINABLE WAY: LOOKS, MANNER, BACKGROUND.
NOW I AM CERTAIN...
...THAT I AM THE SUPERIOR WOMAN...

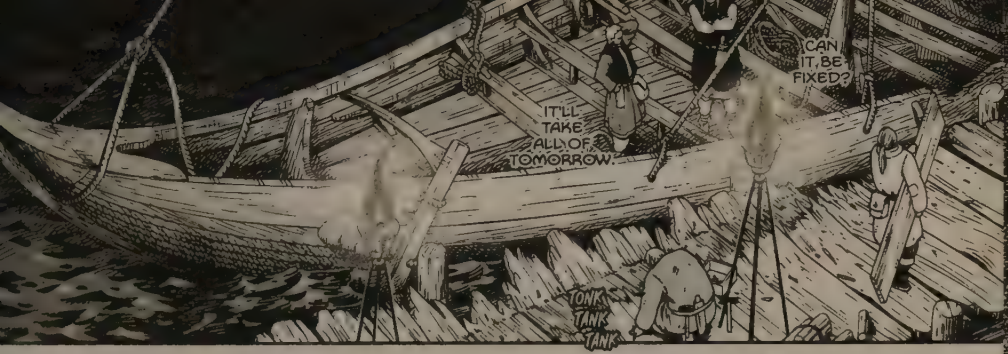
...

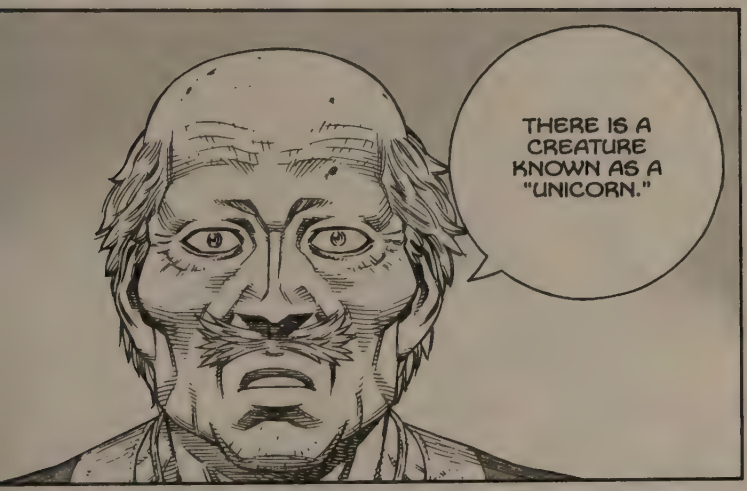

WITH THAT HAIR-CUT, I CAN'T BE CERTAIN YOU'RE A WOMAN AT ALL!
AND LOOK AT WHAT YOU'RE WEARING! TROUSERS?

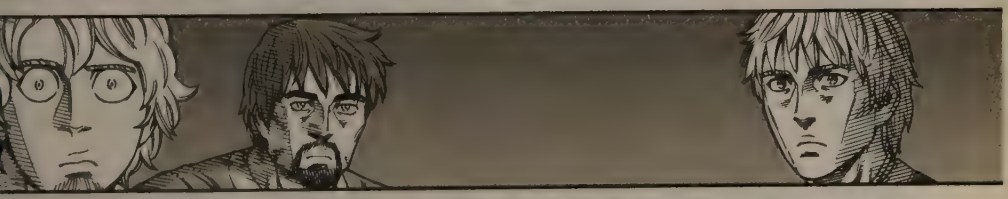
OHHH HOH HOH HOH!
OUR COMPE-TITION HASN'T EVEN STARTED YET.
YOU'LL NEVER HAVE SIGURD, GUDRID!

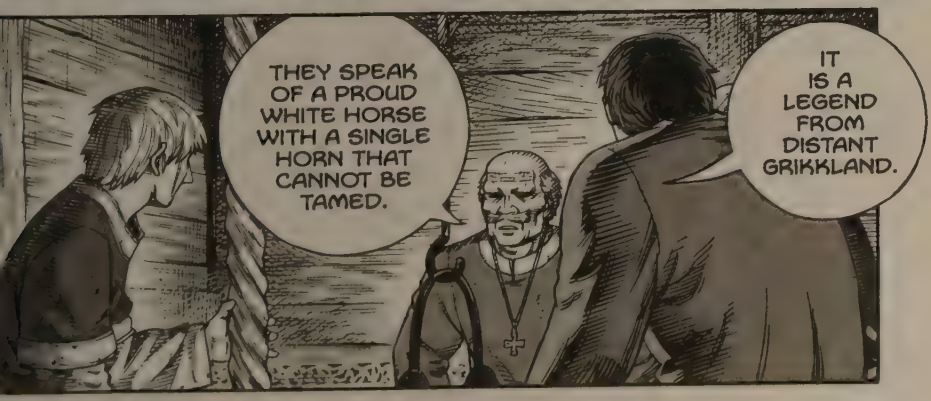
ITS HORN SUPPOSEDLY HAS THE POWER TO ERASE POISON AND CURE DISEASE.

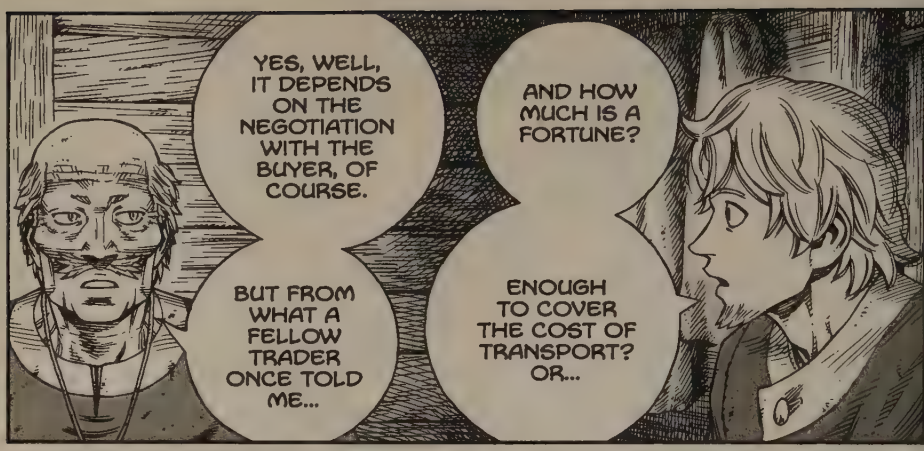


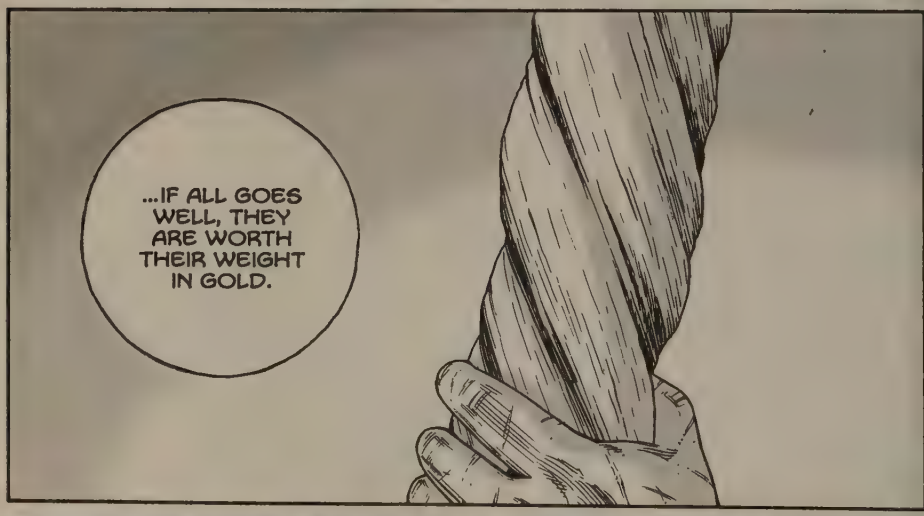

CAN IT BE FIXED?
IT'LL TAKE ALL OF TOMORROW.
TONK TANK TANK


THERE IS A CREATURE KNOWN AS A "UNICORN."

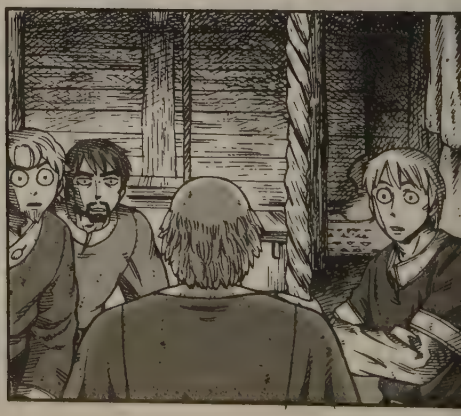


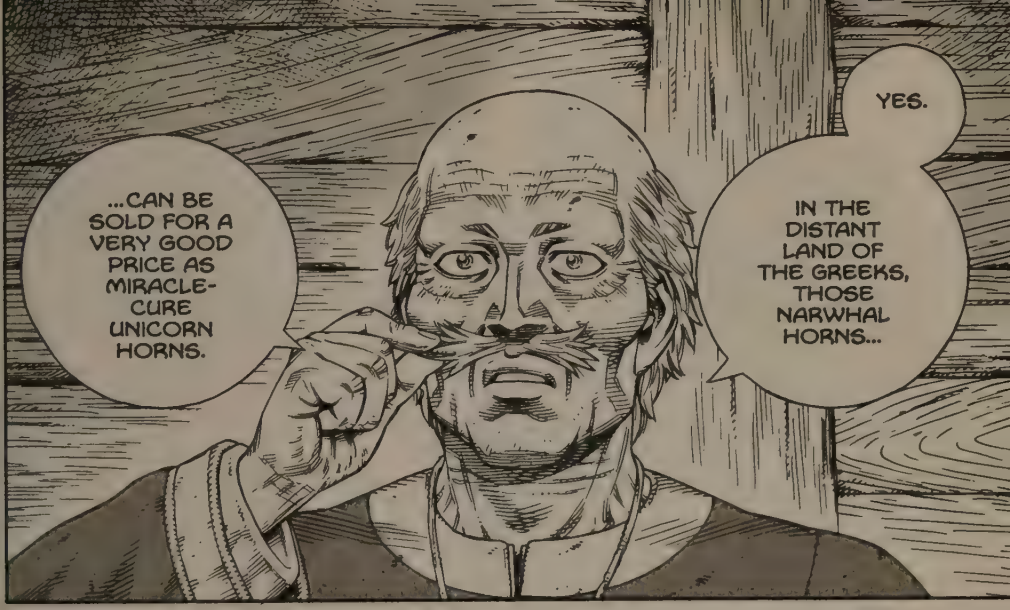

THEY SPEAK OF A PROUD WHITE HORSE WITH A SINGLE HORN THAT CANNOT BE TAMED.
IT IS A LEGEND FROM DISTANT GRIKKLAND.

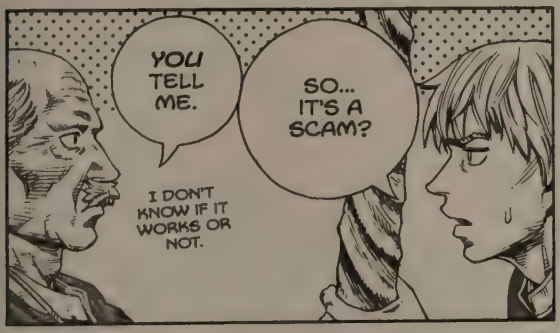

YES, WELL, IT DEPENDS ON THE NEGOTIATION WITH THE BUYER, OF COURSE.
AND HOW MUCH IS A FORTUNE?
BUT FROM WHAT A FELLOW TRADER ONCE TOLD ME...
ENOUGH TO COVER THE COST OF TRANSPORT? OR...

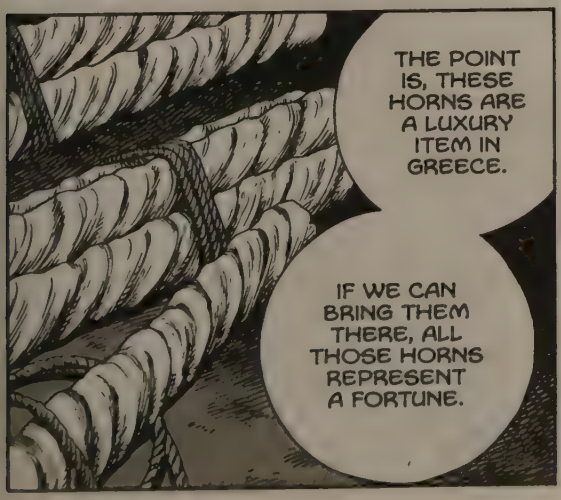

...IF ALL GOES WELL, THEY ARE WORTH THEIR WEIGHT IN GOLD.

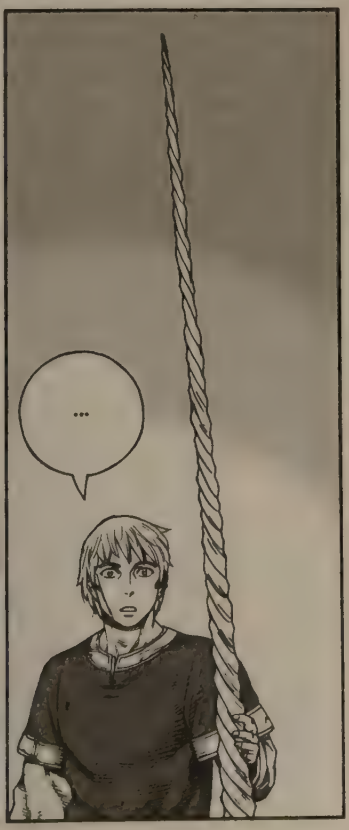
GOLD...
...

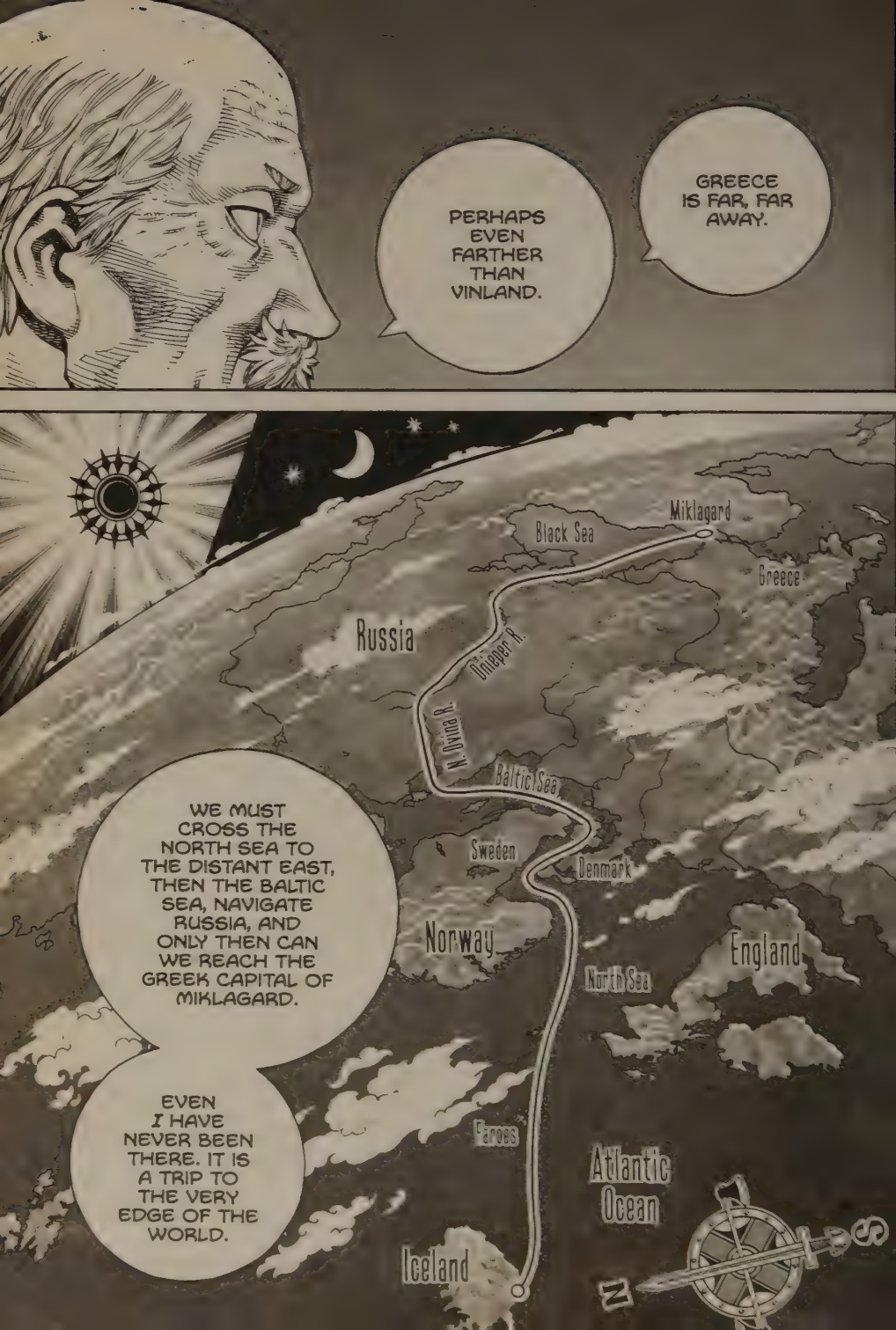



...CAN BE SOLD FOR A VERY GOOD PRICE AS MIRACLE-CURE UNICORN HORNS.
YES.
IN THE DISTANT LAND OF THE GREEKS, THOSE NARWHAL HORNS...

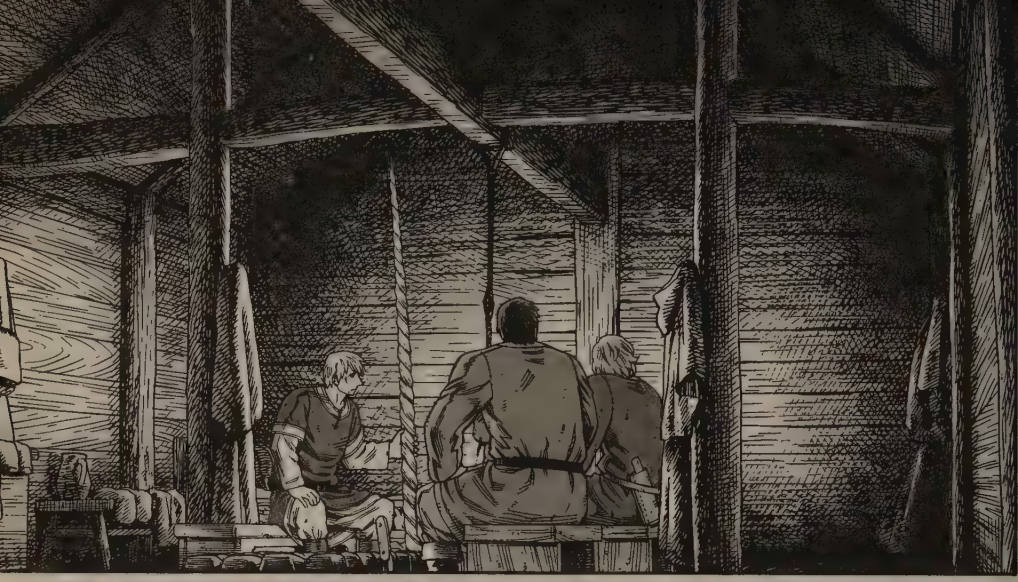

YOU TELL ME.
SO... IT'S A SCAM?
I DON'T KNOW IF IT WORKS OR NOT.


THE POINT IS, THESE HORNS ARE A LUXURY ITEM IN GREECE.
IF WE CAN BRING THEM THERE, ALL THOSE HORNS REPRESENT A FORTUNE.


...

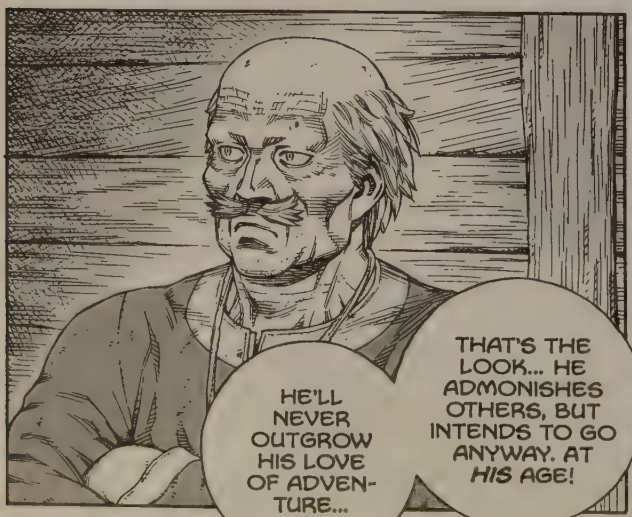

PERHAPS EVEN FARTHER THAN VINLAND.
GREECE IS FAR, FAR AWAY.
Miklagard
Black Sea
Greece
Russia
Dnieper R.
N. Dvina R.
Baltic Sea
Sweden
Denmark
Norway
England
North Sea
Faroes
Atlantic Ocean
Iceland
N
S
WE MUST CROSS THE NORTH SEA TO THE DISTANT EAST, THEN THE BALTIC SEA, NAVIGATE RUSSIA, AND ONLY THEN CAN WE REACH THE GREEK CAPITAL OF MIKLAGARD.
EVEN I HAVE NEVER BEEN THERE. IT IS A TRIP TO THE VERY EDGE OF THE WORLD.

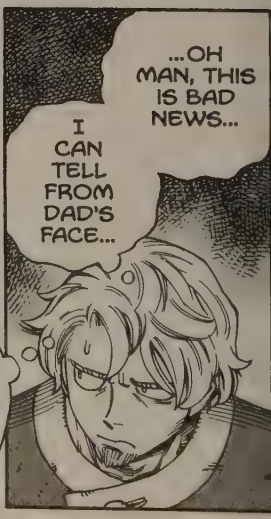
FLA
SHOO
FLASH
IT'S... SO BRIGHT!
WHOAAA!
LET'S DO IT, LEIF! LET'S GO TO GREECE!!
YOUTH ALWAYS COME TO THE SIMPLEST CONCLUSION.



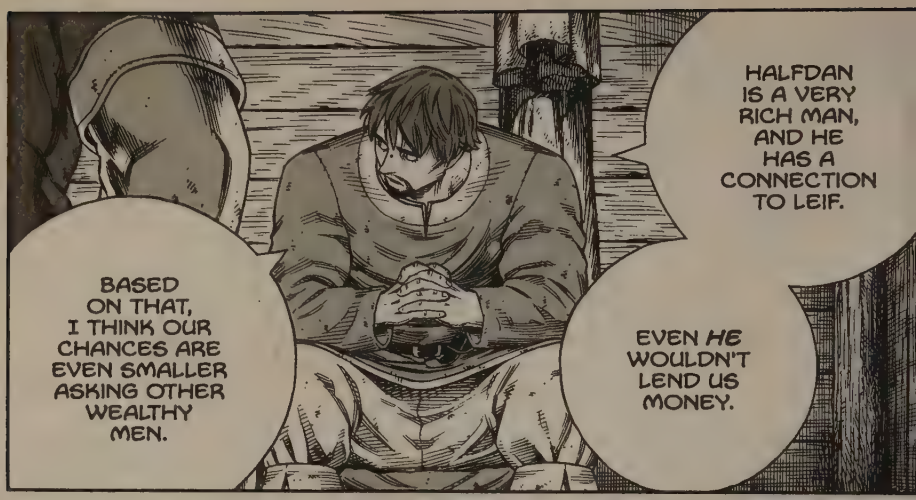
SO *THIS* IS THE "CHALLENGE."

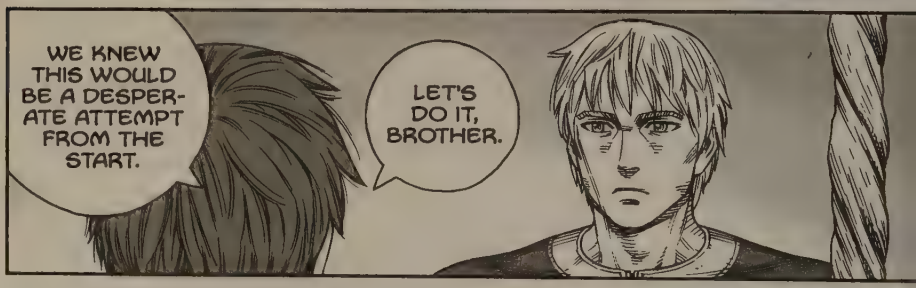
...I SEE...

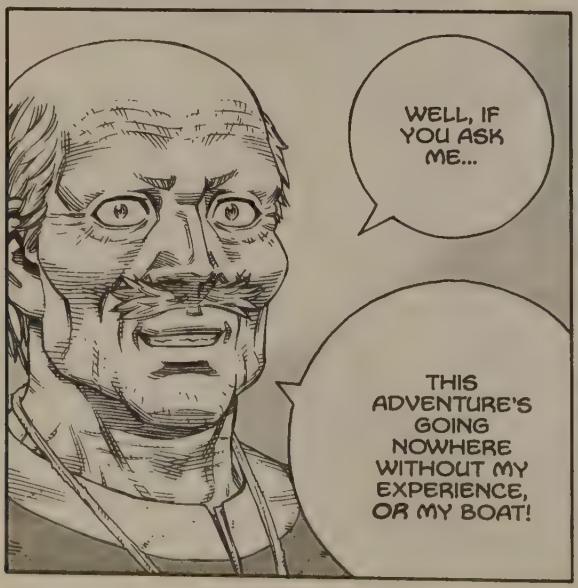

HE'LL NEVER OUTGROW HIS LOVE OF ADVENTURE...
THAT'S THE LOOK... HE ADMONISHES OTHERS, BUT INTENDS TO GO ANYWAY. AT *HIS* AGE!


I CAN TELL FROM DAD'S FACE...
...OH MAN, THIS IS BAD NEWS...

...
HOW LONG WILL THAT TAKE?
I DON'T KNOW.
WE SHOULD PLAN UNDER THE ASSUMPTION THAT IT WILL TAKE AN ENTIRE YEAR, ONE WAY.
...SO THE JOURNEY WILL NOT BE EASY.
THERE ARE PIRATES AT SEA, AND BEASTS ON LAND.
THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT WE WILL SURVIVE THE TRIP.


HALFDAN IS A VERY RICH MAN, AND HE HAS A CONNECTION TO LEIF.
BASED ON THAT, I THINK OUR CHANCES ARE EVEN SMALLER ASKING OTHER WEALTHY MEN.
EVEN *HE* WOULDN'T LEND US MONEY.

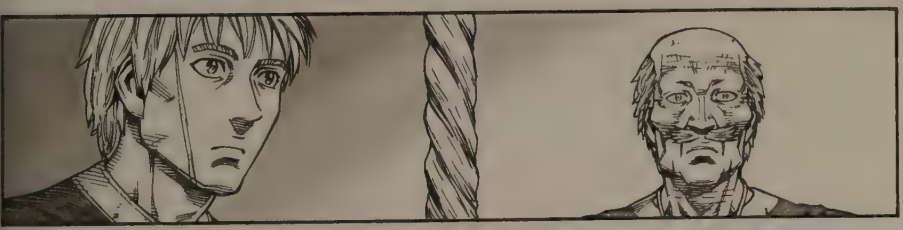

WE KNEW THIS WOULD BE A DESPERATE ATTEMPT FROM THE START.
LET'S DO IT, BROTHER.

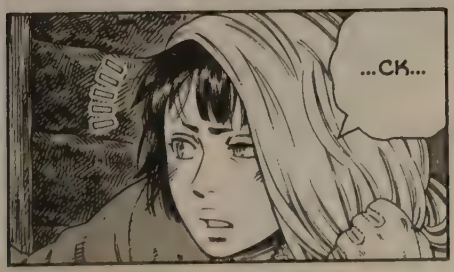

WELL, IF YOU ASK ME...
THIS ADVENTURE'S GOING NOWHERE WITHOUT MY EXPERIENCE, OR MY BOAT!

MISTER LEIF...

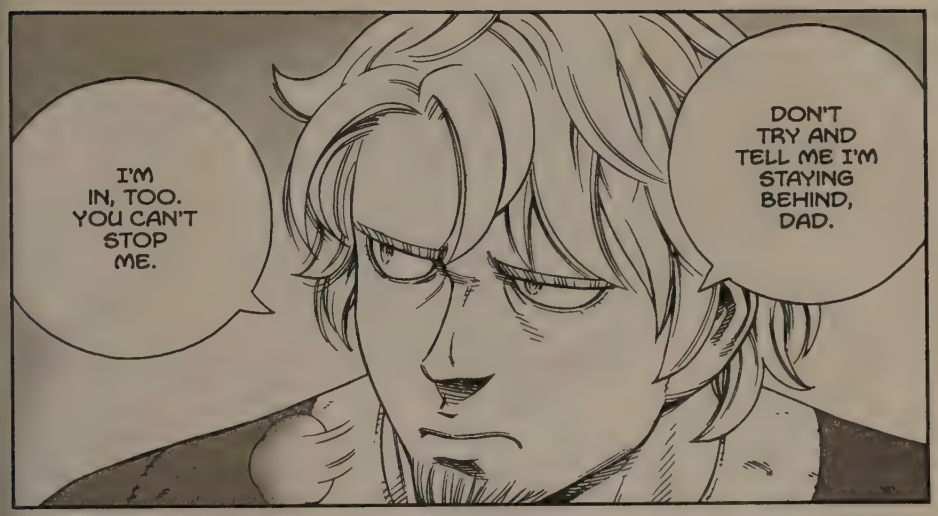
I'LL DO IT.

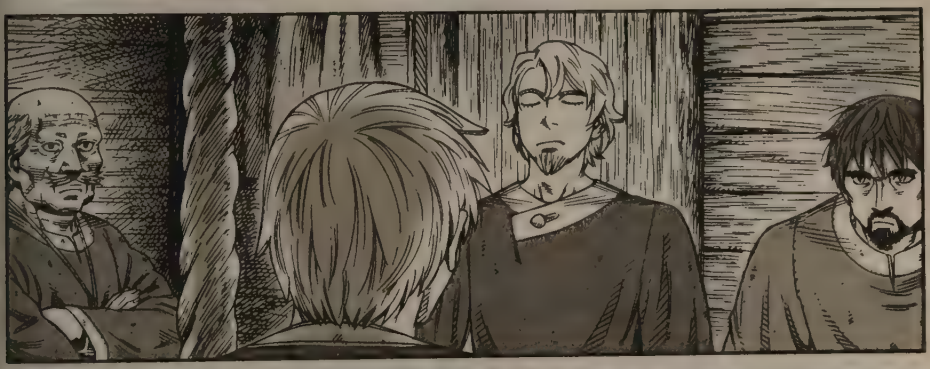
I'M IN.

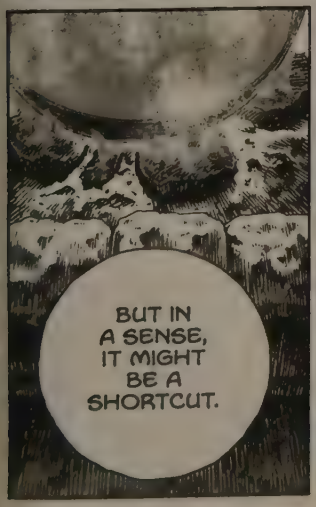


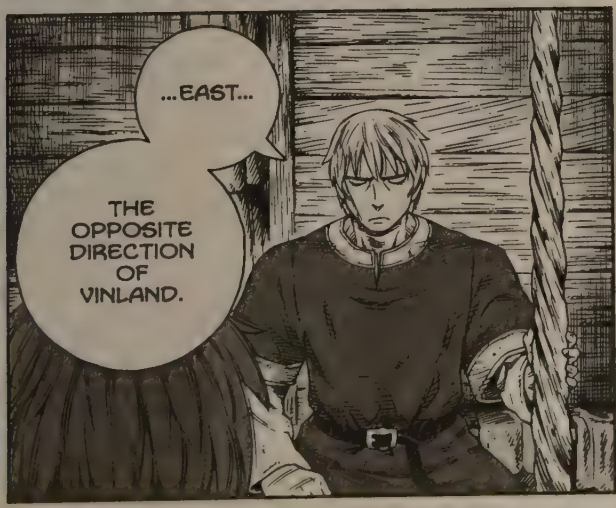


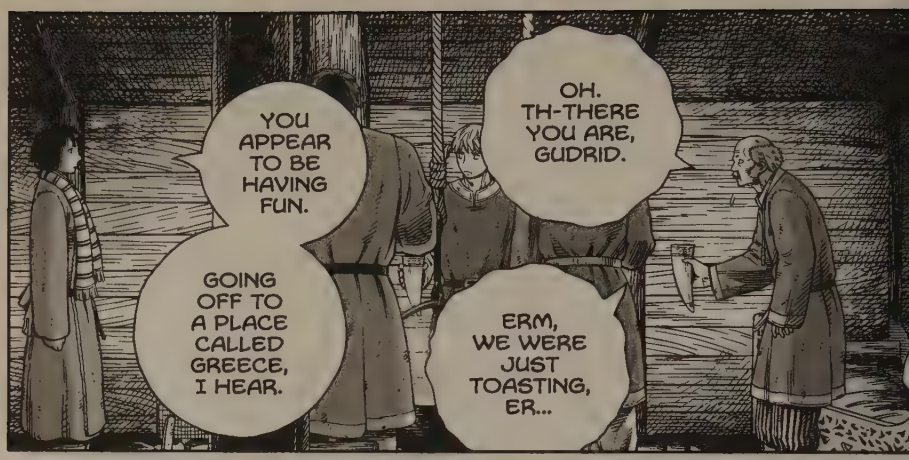
LET'S GO.
TO THE DISTANT LAND OF GREECE.
HA HA HA HA
AN ADVENTURE ALWAYS SENDS MY HEART RACING, NO MATTER HOW OLD I GET!
WE'LL BRING BACK A FORTUNE IN GOLD AND SHOW HALFDAN WHAT WE'RE REALLY MADE OF!
I PROPOSE A TOAST!
GOOD.
THAT SETTLES IT!
WELP, HERE WE GO.

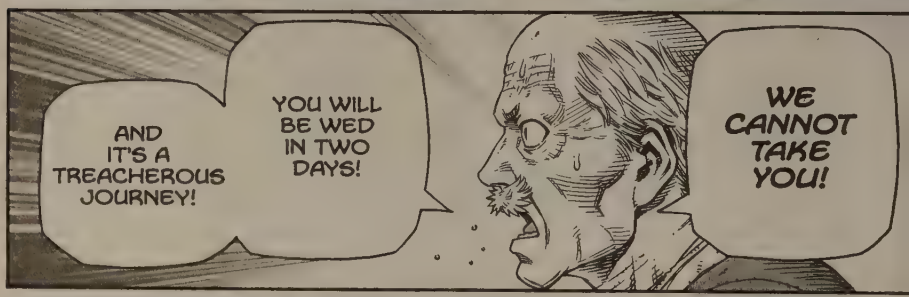

I'M IN, TOO. YOU CAN'T STOP ME.
DON'T TRY AND TELL ME I'M STAYING BEHIND, DAD.

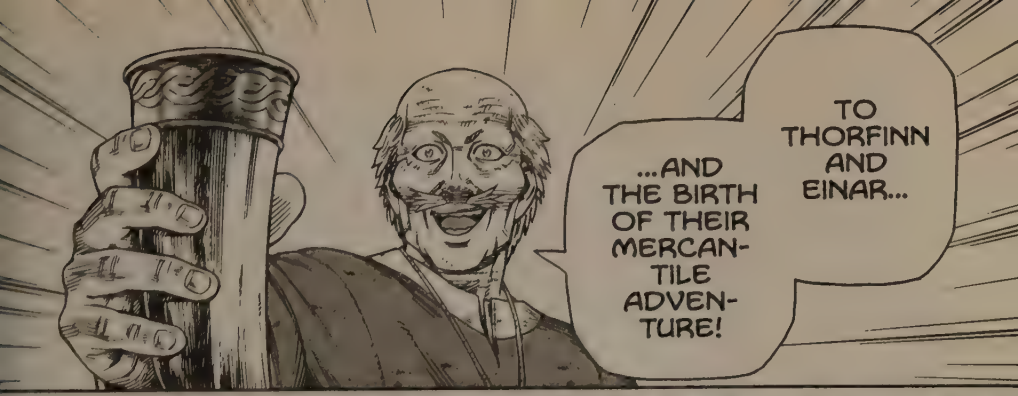


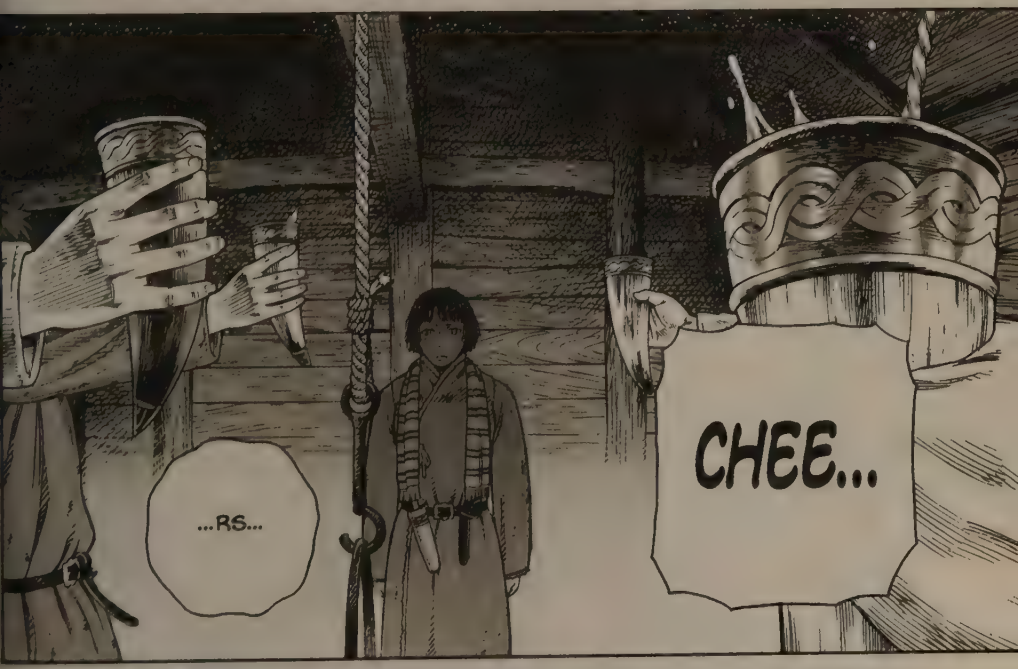

BUT IN A SENSE, IT MIGHT BE A SHORTCUT.


...EAST...
THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION OF VINLAND.


YOU APPEAR TO BE HAVING FUN.
GOING OFF TO A PLACE CALLED GREECE, I HEAR.
OH. TH-THERE YOU ARE, GUDRID.
ERM, WE WERE JUST TOASTING, ER...

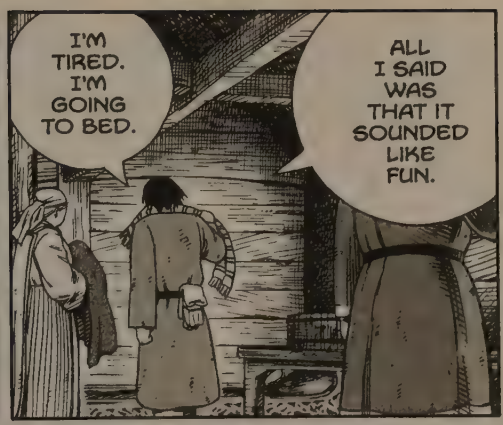

AND IT'S A TREACHEROUS JOURNEY!
YOU WILL BE WED IN TWO DAYS!
WE CANNOT TAKE YOU!


...AND THE BIRTH OF THEIR MERCANTILE ADVENTURE!
TO THORFINN AND EINAR...

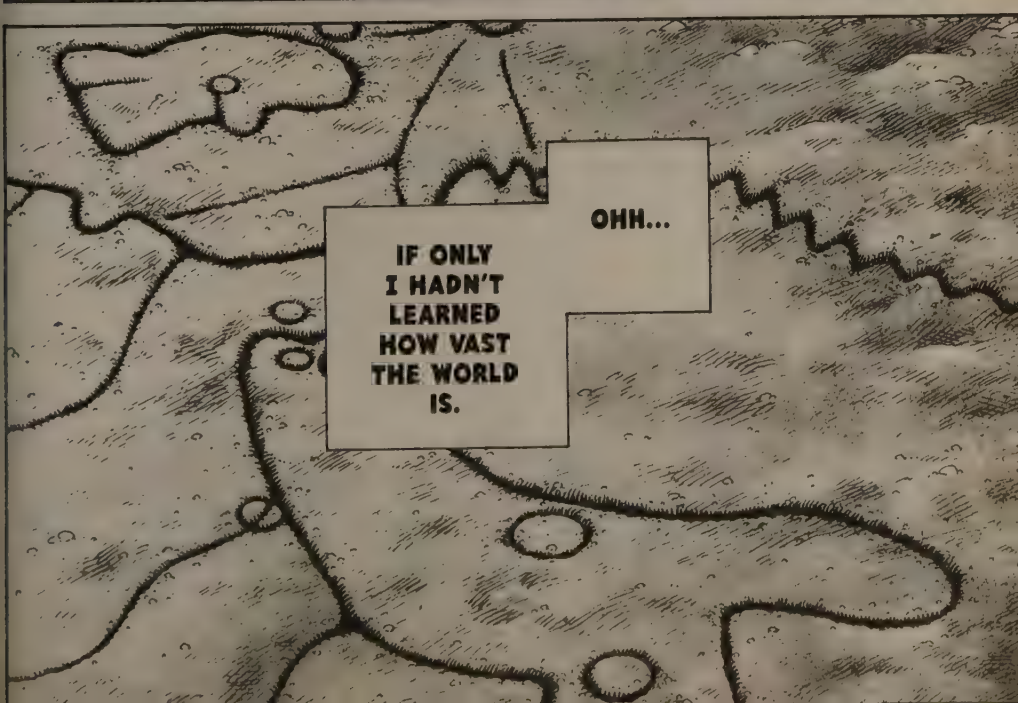

...RS...
CHEE...

CHAPTER 107:
THE FETTERED TERN (7)

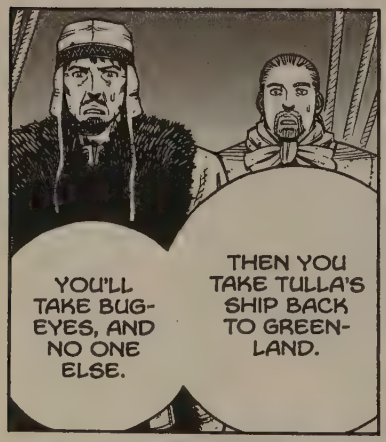
SHE'LL TRY. MARK MY WORDS.
WATCH OUT FOR STOW-AWAYS.
OKAY.

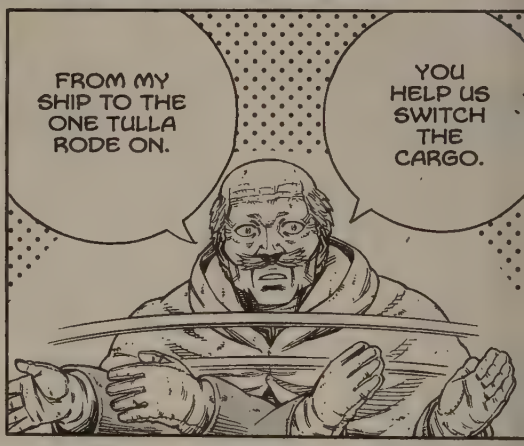

I'M TIRED. I'M GOING TO BED.
ALL I SAID WAS THAT IT SOUNDED LIKE FUN.

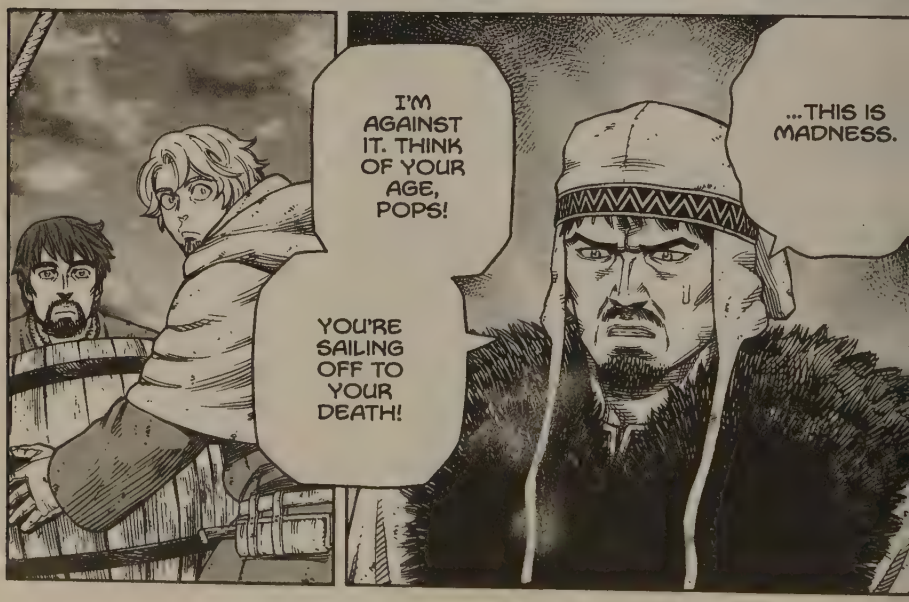
I'M EX-HAUSTED TODAY.
I'M NOT READY TO LISTEN TO HIM LECTURE ME ABOUT HOW A WOMAN CAN'T BE A SAILOR.


OHH...
IF ONLY I HADN'T LEARNED HOW VAST THE WORLD IS.

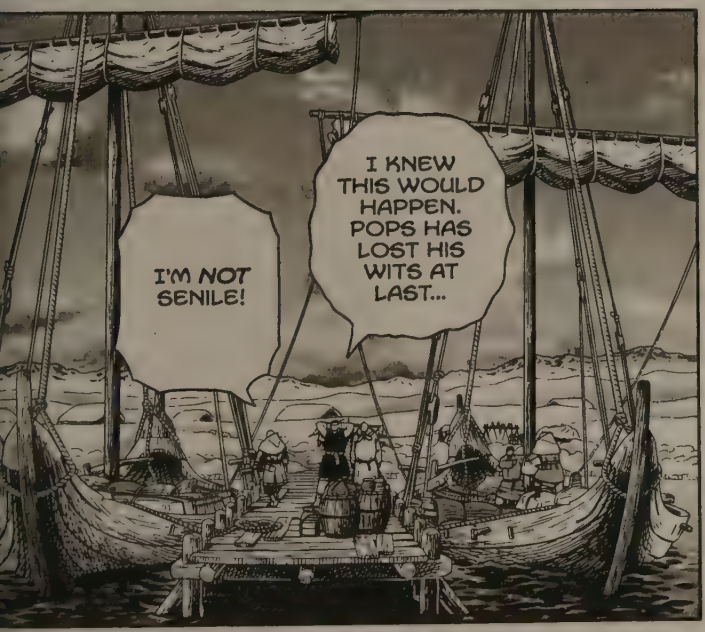
MIKLAGARD.
CAPITAL OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE.
B-BUT WHERE IN GREECE...?


YOU'LL TAKE BUG-EYES, AND NO ONE ELSE.
THEN YOU TAKE TULLA'S SHIP BACK TO GREEN-LAND.


FROM MY SHIP TO THE ONE TULLA RODE ON.
YOU HELP US SWITCH THE CARGO.


I'M AGAINST IT. THINK OF YOUR AGE, POPS!
YOU'RE SAILING OFF TO YOUR DEATH!
...THIS IS MADNESS.

FOR GREECE ?!
LEAVING IN TWO DAYS?!


I'M NOT SENILE!
I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN. POPS HAS LOST HIS WITS AT LAST...

AYE.
WE'RE NOT GOING BACK TO GREEN-LAND. SEND MY REGARDS TO THE VILLAGE.

INSTEAD, WE'LL STAY FOR GUDRID'S WEDDING AND THEN LEAVE.
IF WE GO BACK TO THE FARM NOW, THE ICE FLOES MIGHT LOCK US IN. THAT ADDS ANOTHER SIX MONTHS TO OUR SCHEDULE.

THERE WE GO.

HE'S A GOOD YOUNG MAN.

HE'S INHERITED THORS'S HEART AND WILL.

I'M BETTING ON HIS CHANCES.

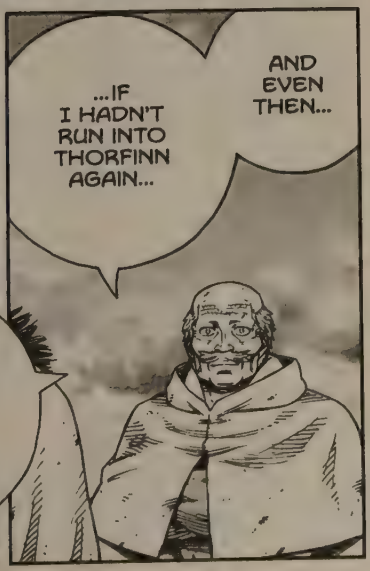
I BELIEVE THAT HE WILL FIND A COMMON UNDERSTANDING WITH THE INHABITANTS OF VINLAND.

I WANT TO BE OF SERVICE TO SUCH PROMISING YOUNG MEN.

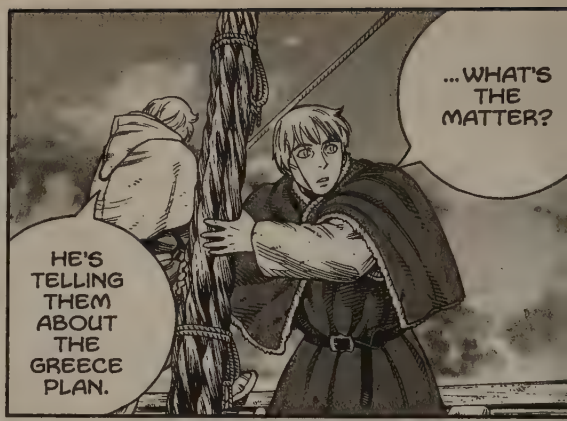
WHAT BETTER USE FOR THE LITTLE TIME I'VE GOT LEFT THAN TO HELP SAVE MY PEOPLE FROM MISERY?
SETTLING VINLAND IS THE DEEPEST DESIRE OF ALL GREEN-LANDERS.

...AN OLD MAN PLAY COOL FOR A BIT?
YOU CAN'T LET...
...I WON'T DENY THAT, EITHER.
YOU JUST WANT TO GO ON ANOTHER ADVENTURE, DON'T YOU?
THAT'S A LIE!

...I DON'T THINK I'D HAVE MADE UP MY MIND TO UNDER-TAKE THIS MAD CHALLENGE.


...IF I HADN'T RUN INTO THORFINN AGAIN...
AND EVEN THEN...

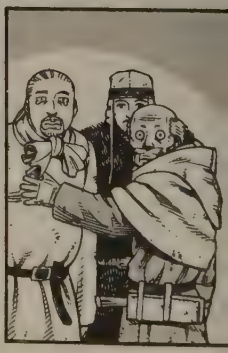
I FEEL BAD ABOUT THA-
I SEE...


...WHAT'S THE MATTER?
HE'S TELLING THEM ABOUT THE GREECE PLAN.

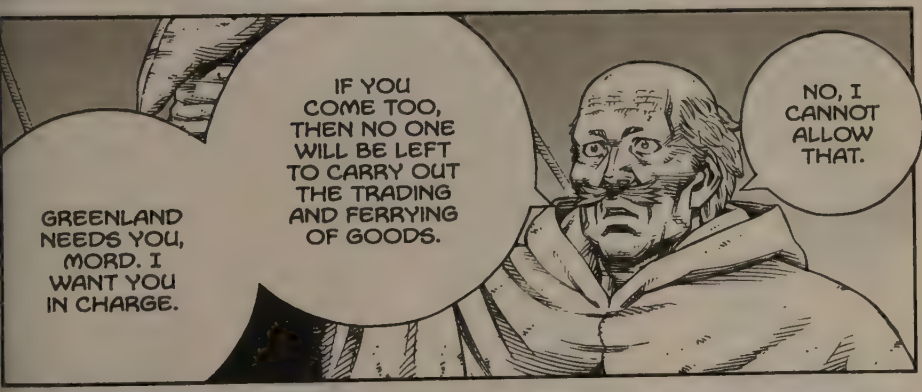
WHOAH?!
ACK

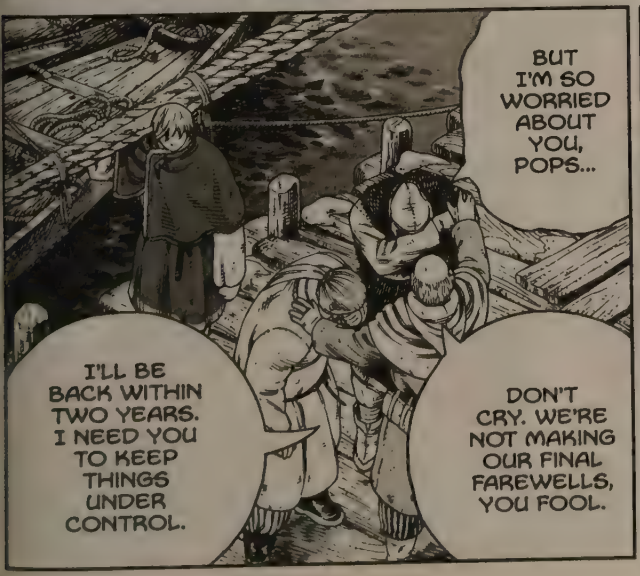
SO EVEN MORD AND THE OTHER SAILORS ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND...

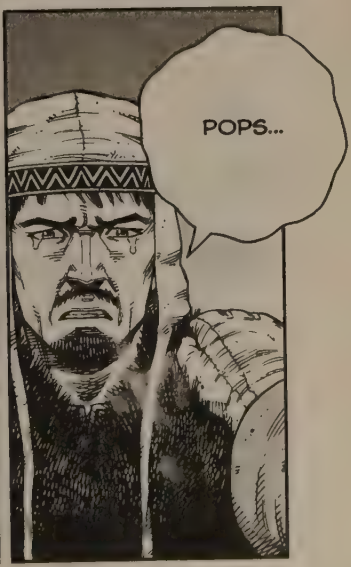
SCUTTLE
SCUTTLE
SCUTTLE
...

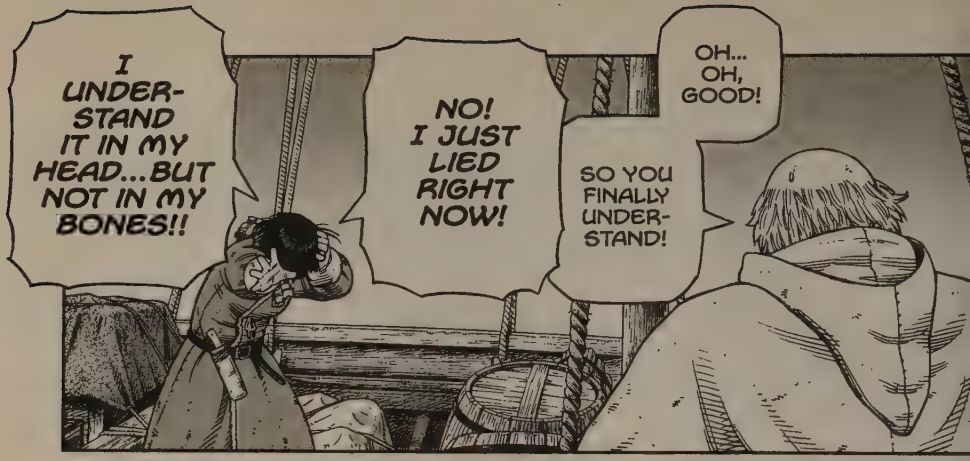


BUG-EYES AND YOU BEING THE ONLY EXPERIENCED SAILORS IS TOO FEW FOR COMFORT.
...THEN I'M WITH YOU.

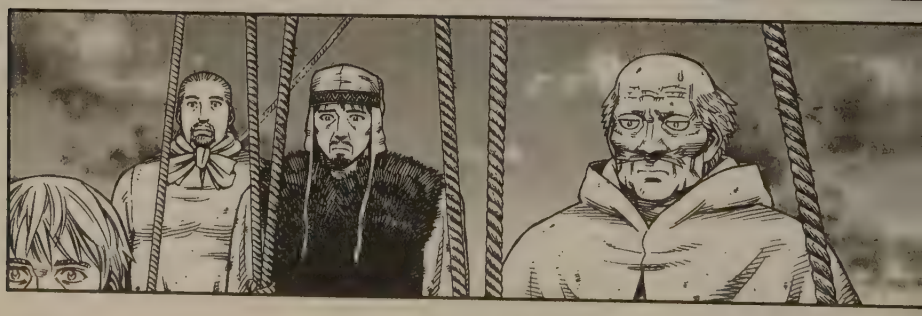

GREENLAND NEEDS YOU, MORD. I WANT YOU IN CHARGE.
IF YOU COME TOO, THEN NO ONE WILL BE LEFT TO CARRY OUT THE TRADING AND FERRYING OF GOODS.
NO, I CANNOT ALLOW THAT.

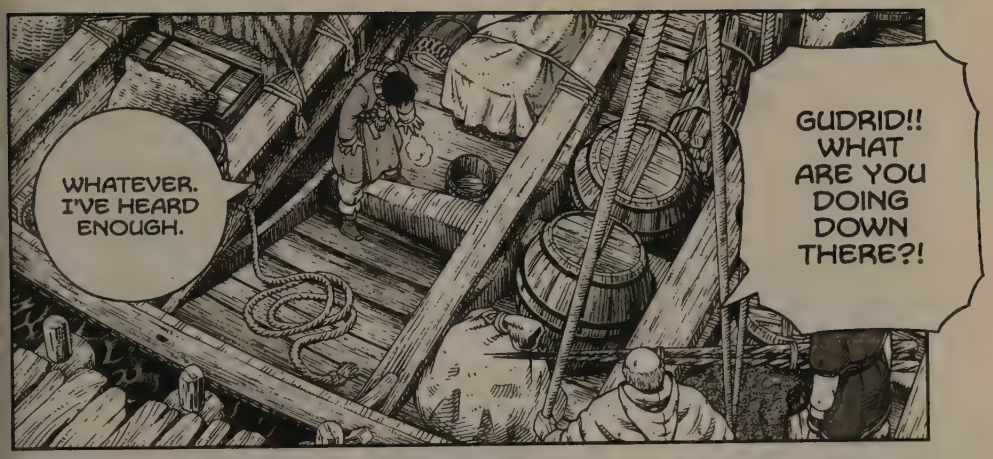

I'LL BE BACK WITHIN TWO YEARS. I NEED YOU TO KEEP THINGS UNDER CONTROL.
BUT I'M SO WORRIED ABOUT YOU, POPS...
DON'T CRY. WE'RE NOT MAKING OUR FINAL FAREWELLS, YOU FOOL.


POPS...


I UNDER-STAND IT IN MY HEAD...BUT NOT IN MY BONES!!
NO! I JUST LIED RIGHT NOW!
SO YOU FINALLY UNDER-STAND!
OH... OH, GOOD!

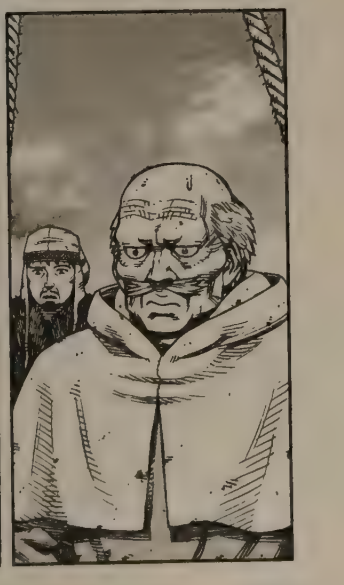
TO SEE IF I HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A SAILOR OR NOT!
OTHER-WISE I'LL NEVER ACCEPT YOUR DECISION!
JUST ONCE! JUST GIVE ME A TEST!

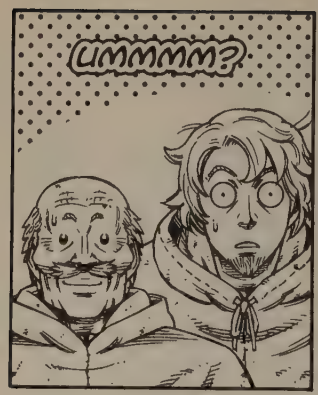


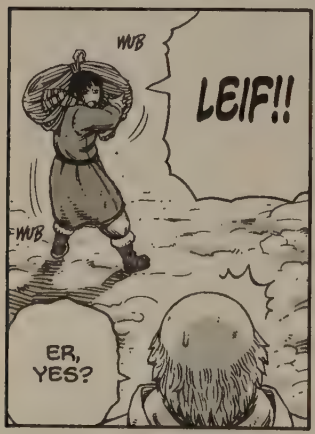

GUDRID!! WHAT ARE YOU DOING DOWN THERE?!
WHATEVER. I'VE HEARD ENOUGH.

"YOU ARE ABOUT TO BE WED."
"A WOMAN CANNOT BE A SAILOR."
"IT'S POINTLESS TO STOW AWAY WITH US."

I KNOW THAT.
I KNOW THAT EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN ROLE TO FULFILL...

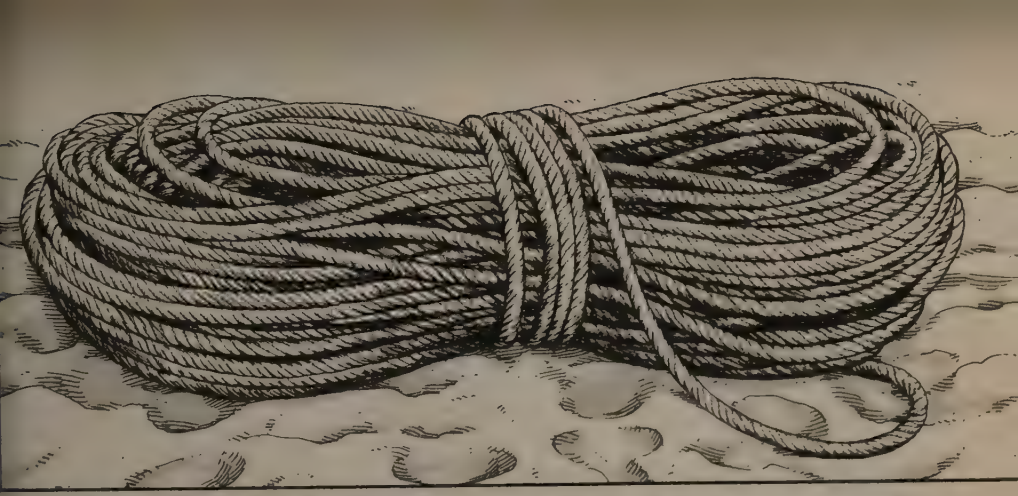


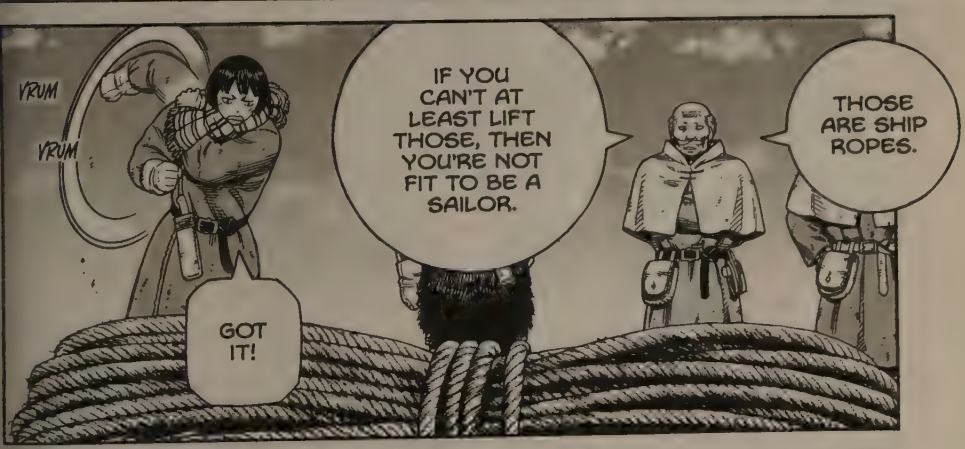

UMMMM?

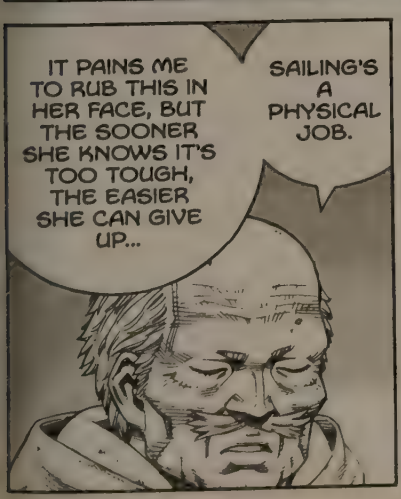

WUB
WUB
LEIF!!
ER, YES?

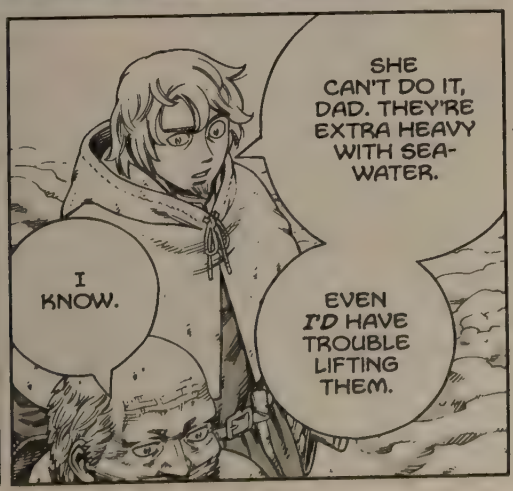
YOU SEE THIS ?!
ER, YES...

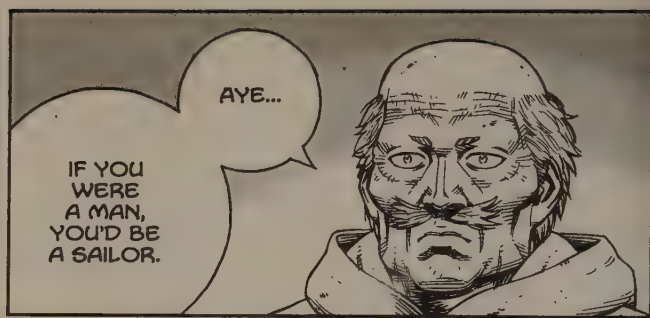
HURRRRNNGH

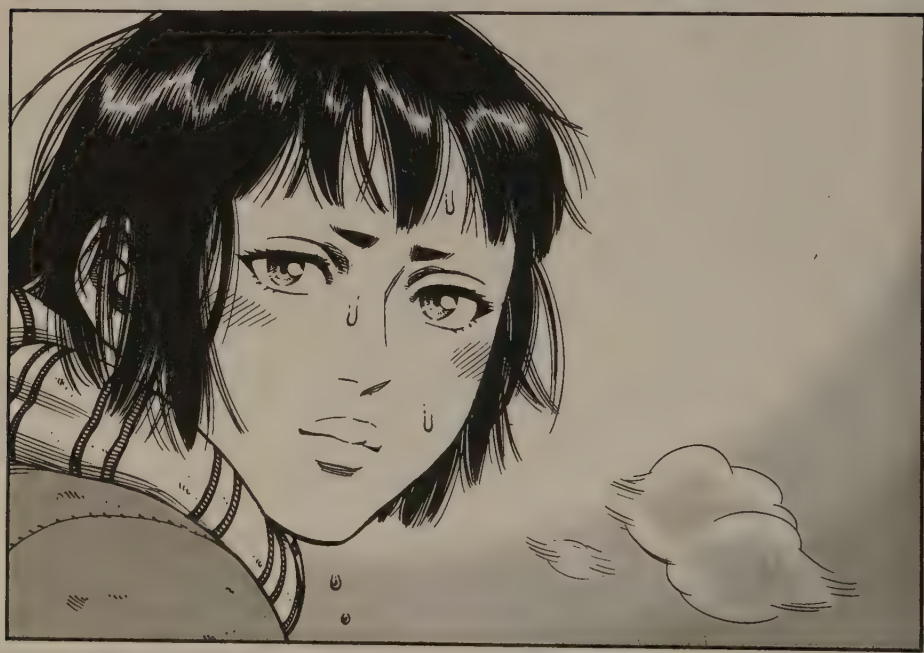


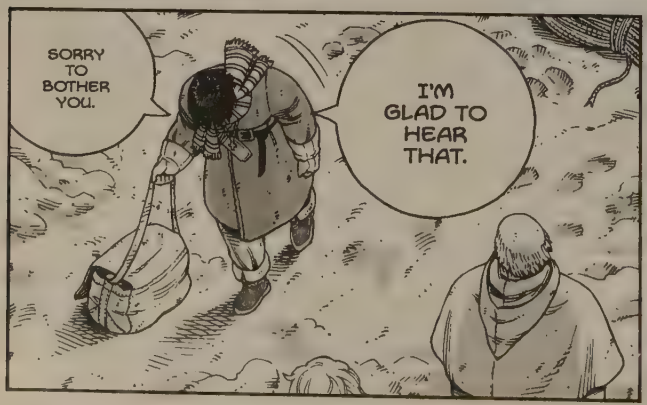

VRUM
VRUM
GOT IT!
IF YOU CAN'T AT LEAST LIFT THOSE, THEN YOU'RE NOT FIT TO BE A SAILOR.
THOSE ARE SHIP ROPES.


IT PAINS ME TO RUB THIS IN HER FACE, BUT THE SOONER SHE KNOWS IT'S TOO TOUGH, THE EASIER SHE CAN GIVE UP...
SAILING'S A PHYSICAL JOB.

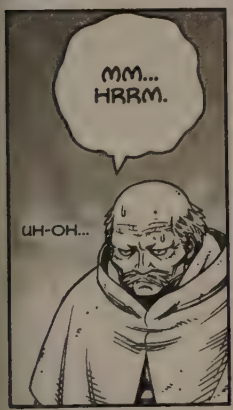

SHE CAN'T DO IT, DAD. THEY'RE EXTRA HEAVY WITH SEA-WATER.
I KNOW.
EVEN *I'D* HAVE TROUBLE LIFTING THEM.


AYE...
IF YOU WERE A MAN, YOU'D BE A SAILOR.

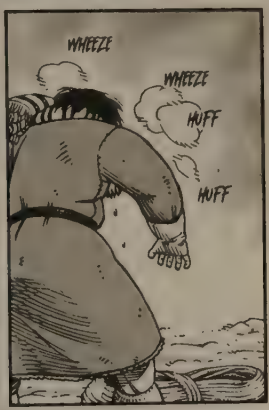



SORRY TO BOTHER YOU.
I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT.

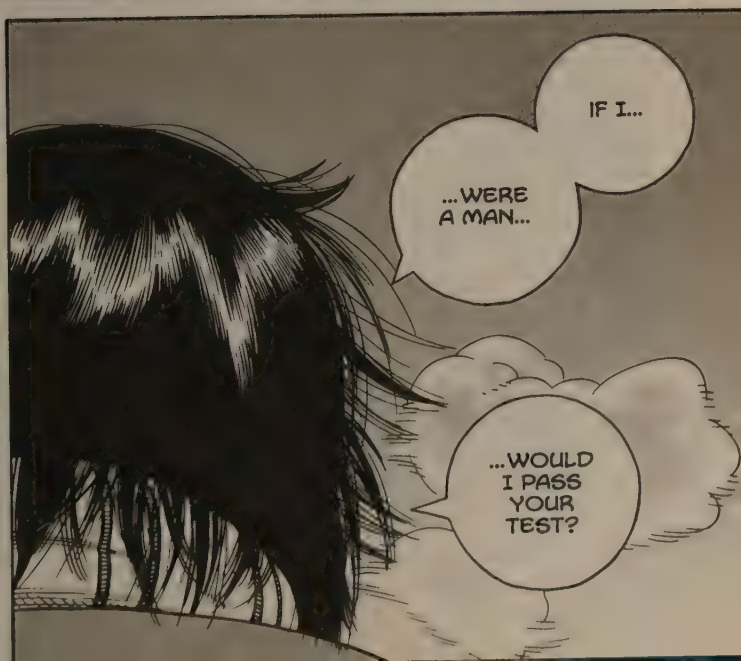
WHUMP


MM... HRRM.
UH-OH...

...DO I HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?
LEIF...


WHEEZE
WHEEZE
HUFF
HUFF

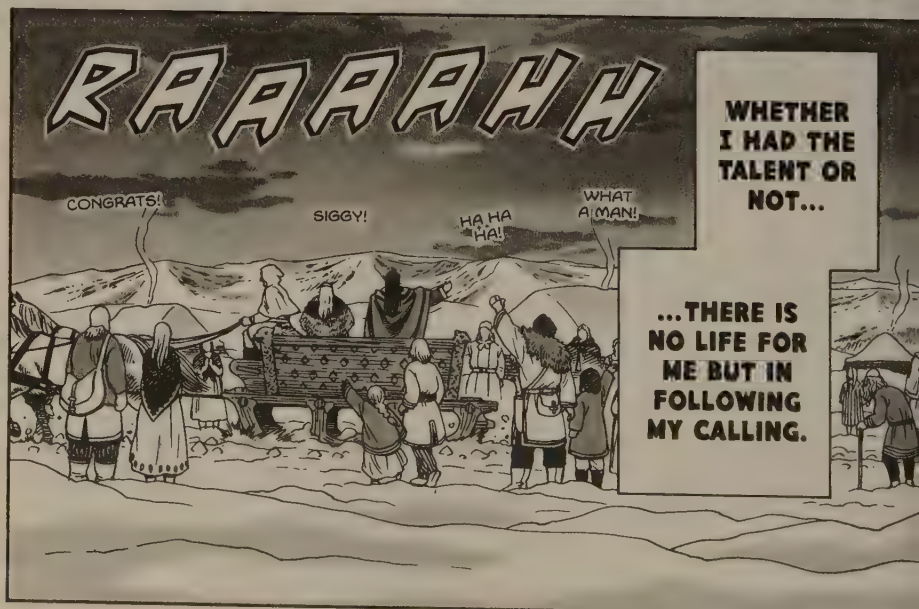
...!


IF I...
...WERE A MAN...
...WOULD I PASS YOUR TEST?

THERE SHE GOES...
AT LAST SHE SEES MY SIDE OF THINGS.
NO! IT'S FOR THE BEST!
IT'S STRANGE ...
WHEN SHE GIVES UP AND BACKS DOWN LIKE THAT, IT STARTS TO MAKE YOU FEEL A BIT...SORRY, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?
...

EVERYONE HAS THEIR OWN CALLING IN LIFE.
PROSPERITY, AND... UHHH...

MY CALLING WAS NOT TO RIDE ON SHIPS.


RAAAAHH
CONGRATS!
SIGGY!
HA HA HA!
WHAT A MAN!
WHETHER I HAD THE TALENT OR NOT...
...THERE IS NO LIFE FOR ME BUT IN FOLLOWING MY CALLING.

SIGURD.

DELIVER YOUR WEDDING VOW BEFORE THIS SWORD, INVESTED WITH THE SPIRITS OF YOUR FORE-FATHERS.

ERRM... OF OUR CLANS...

YES, SIR!

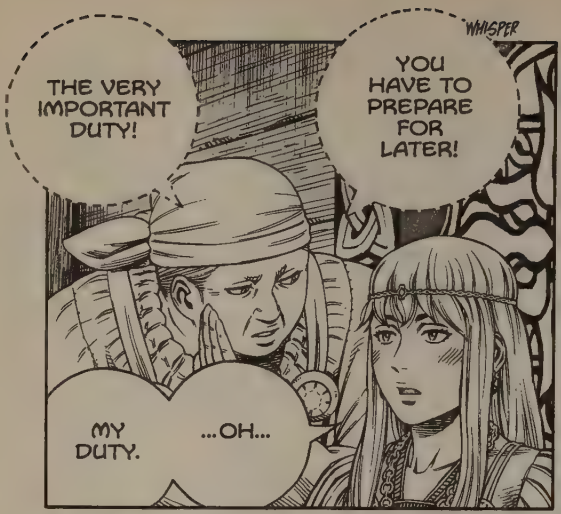
I, SIGURD, DO PLEDGE TO DO HONOR TO MY WIFE GUDRID, FOR THE PROSPERITY OF OUR CLANS...

I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN.

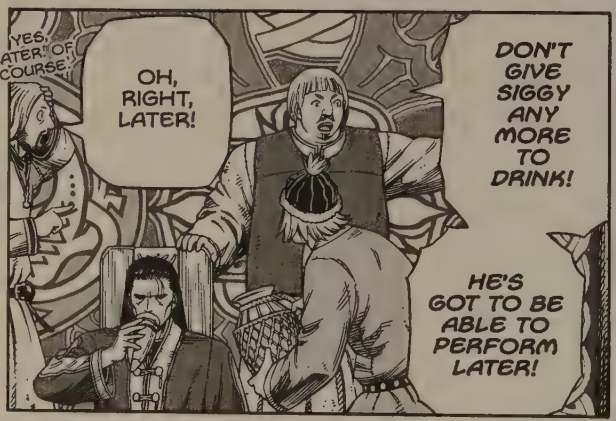
I PLEDGE TO DO MY UTMOST...

AND...

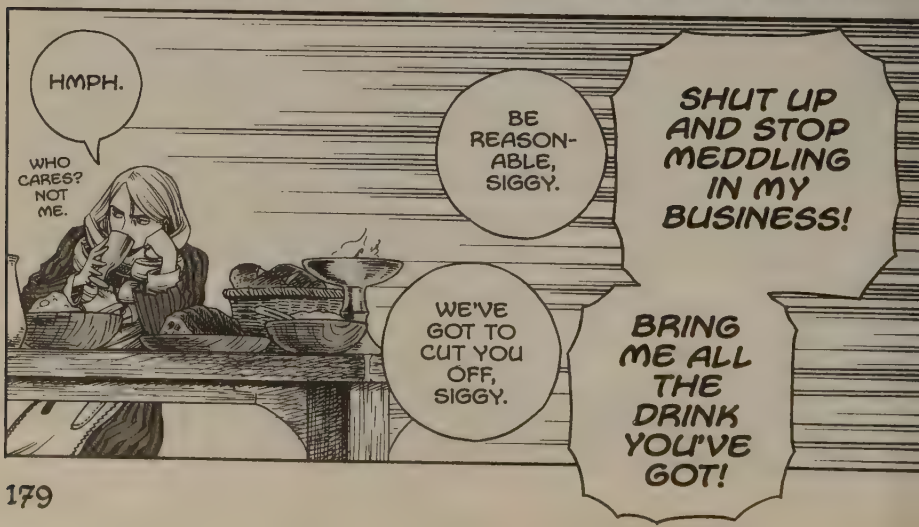
...FOR THE PROSPERITY OF OUR CLANS, AND...


THE VERY IMPORTANT DUTY!
WHISPER
YOU HAVE TO PREPARE FOR LATER!
MY DUTY.
...OH...

WELL, GUDRID, COME TO YOUR CHAMBER NOW.
CHAM-BER?


YES, LATER! OF COURSE!
OH, RIGHT, LATER!
DON'T GIVE SIGGY ANY MORE TO DRINK!
HE'S GOT TO BE ABLE TO PERFORM LATER!

OH!
THE BRIDE'S LEFT.

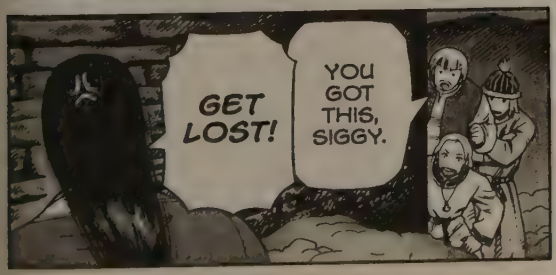

HMPH.
WHO CARES? NOT ME.
BE REASON-ABLE, SIGGY.
SHUT UP AND STOP MEDDLING IN MY BUSINESS!
WE'VE GOT TO CUT YOU OFF, SIGGY.
BRING ME ALL THE DRINK YOU'VE GOT!

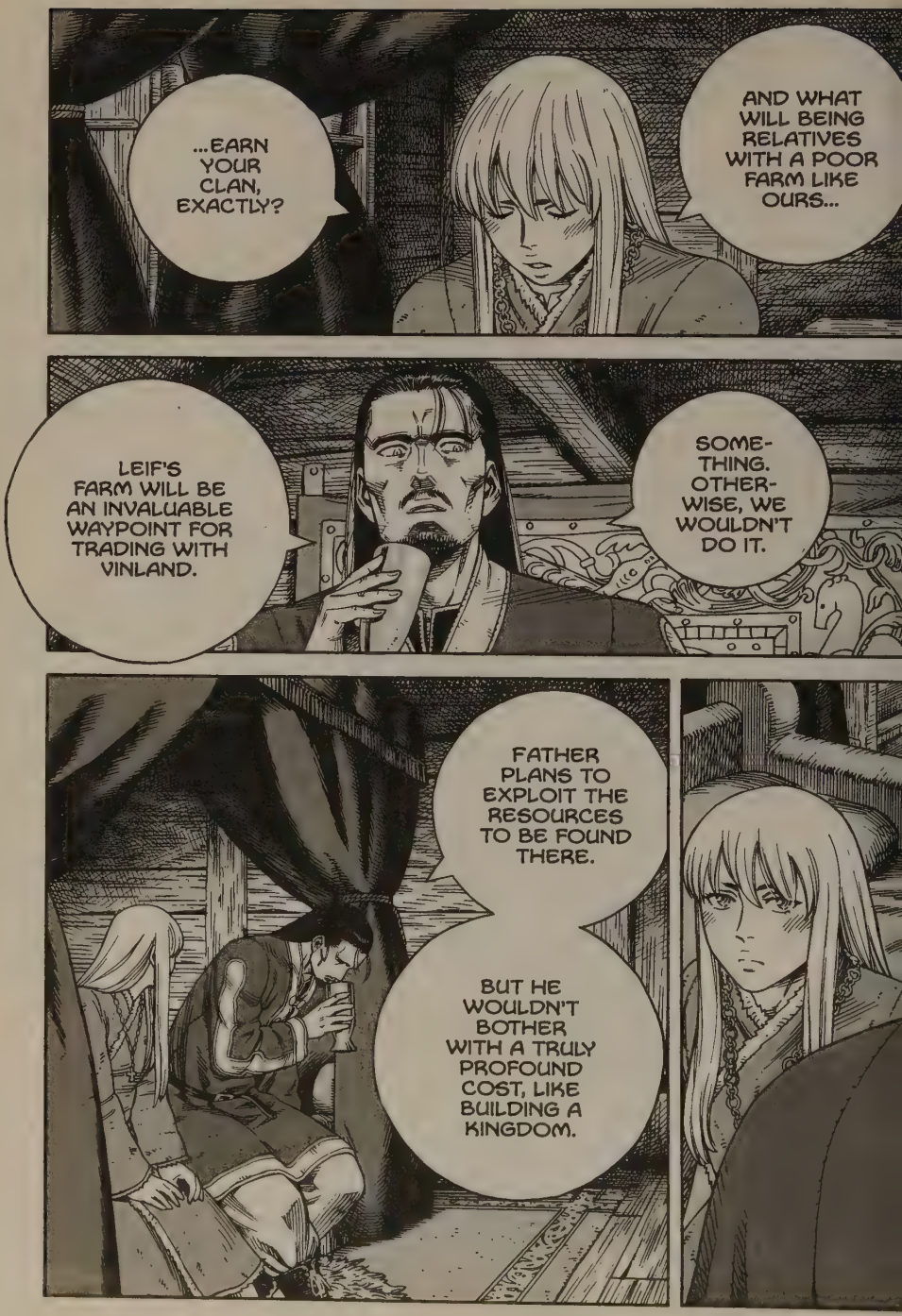
IT WAS JUST...
...THAT I BRISTLED AT BEING TOLD WHAT TO DO, THAT WAS ALL.

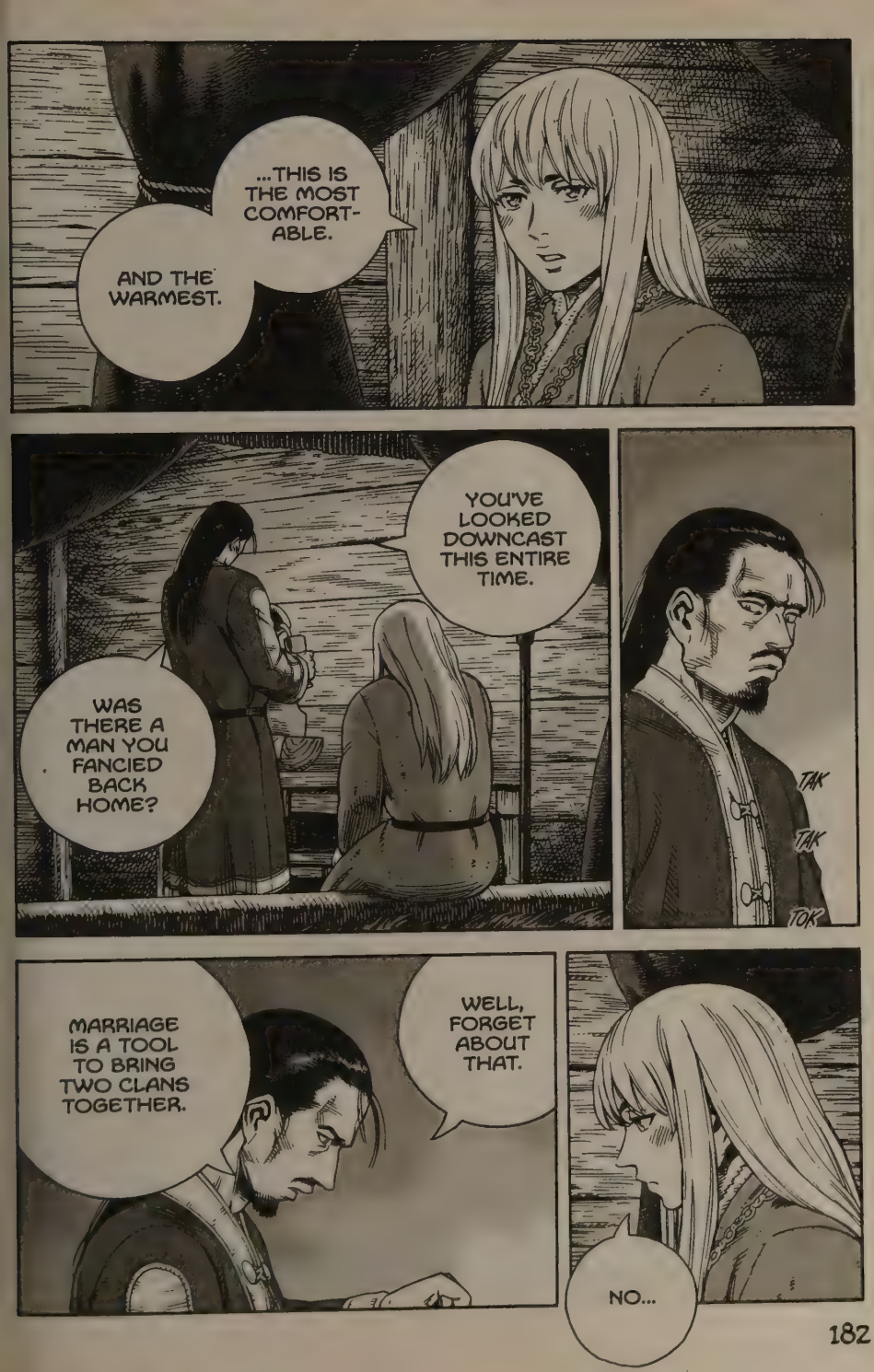
CREAK
BACK IN MEN'S CLOTHING AGAIN.
DO YOU HATE YOUR BRIDAL WEAR?
...

OKAY!

PHEW...


GET LOST!
YOU GOT THIS, SIGGY.

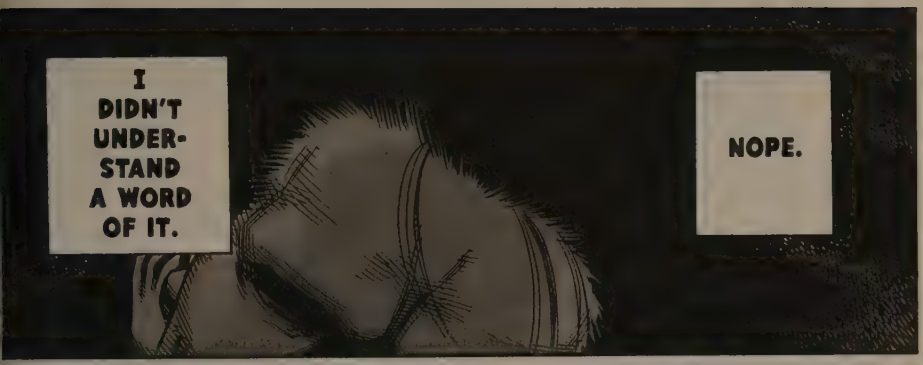

...EARN YOUR CLAN, EXACTLY?
AND WHAT WILL BEING RELATIVES WITH A POOR FARM LIKE OURS...
LEIF'S FARM WILL BE AN INVALUABLE WAYPOINT FOR TRADING WITH VINLAND.
SOME-THING. OTHER-WISE, WE WOULDN'T DO IT.
FATHER PLANS TO EXPLOIT THE RESOURCES TO BE FOUND THERE.
BUT HE WOULDN'T BOTHER WITH A TRULY PROFOUND COST, LIKE BUILDING A KINGDOM.

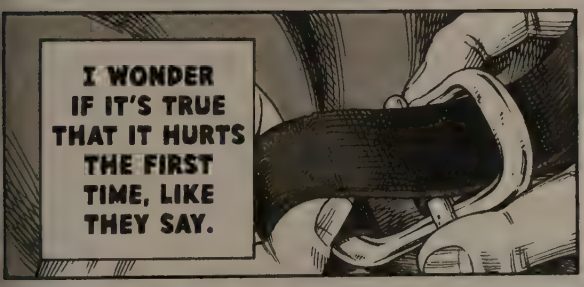

...THIS IS THE MOST COMFORT-ABLE.
AND THE WARMEST.
YOU'VE LOOKED DOWNCAST THIS ENTIRE TIME.
WAS THERE A MAN YOU FANCIED BACK HOME?
TAK
TAK
TOK
MARRIAGE IS A TOOL TO BRING TWO CLANS TOGETHER.
WELL, FORGET ABOUT THAT.
NO...

AND THAT MEANS...
THUMP
TUG
...THAT KEEPING RELATIONS CLOSE BETWEEN OUR FAMILIES WILL BENEFIT BOTH OF US.
UNDER-STAND?
CREAK

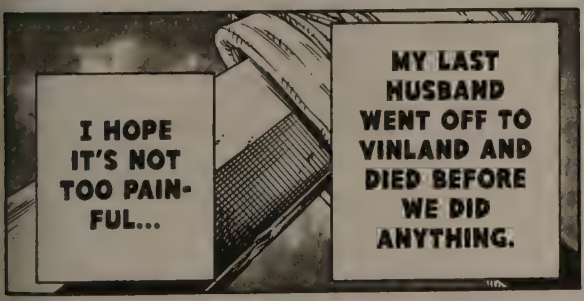
HE'LL CUT THEM ALL DOWN AND SELL THEM HERE FOR GREAT VALUE.
NO...UNLIKE THIS ISLAND, VINLAND HAS FORESTS AND FORESTS OF TREES.
UNTIL NOW, WE'VE HAD TO IMPORT ALL OF OUR LUMBER FROM NORWAY. BUT IF WE ESTABLISH OUR OWN TRADE ROUTE...
ALL THAT'S NECESSARY FOR THAT IS A WOOD-CUTTER'S SHED IN THE VINLAND FORESTS DURING THE SUMMER.
WHAT IS HE TALKING ABOUT...?
FOR LOOKING SO SEVERE, HE SURE DOES LIKE TO TALK...
NONE OF THIS IS TAKING ROOT IN MY HEAD.

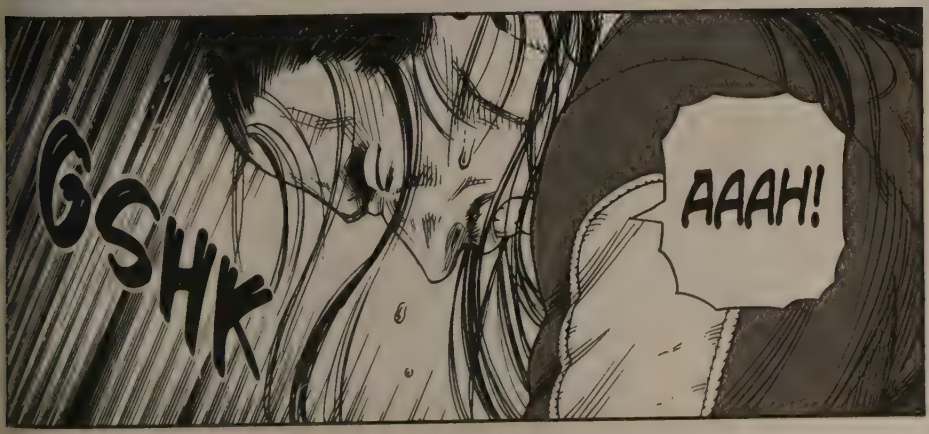
HUH?
WH... WHAT?
I'M SOR...


I DIDN'T UNDER-STAND A WORD OF IT.
NOPE.


I WONDER IF IT'S TRUE THAT IT HURTS THE FIRST TIME, LIKE THEY SAY.

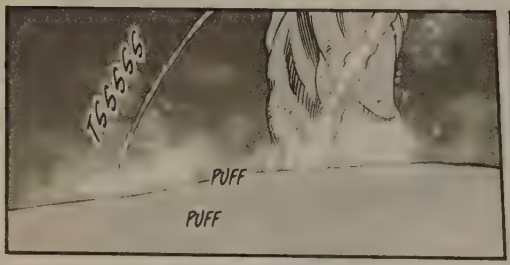
WHAT-EVER.
I'M JUST FULFILL-ING MY ROLE.

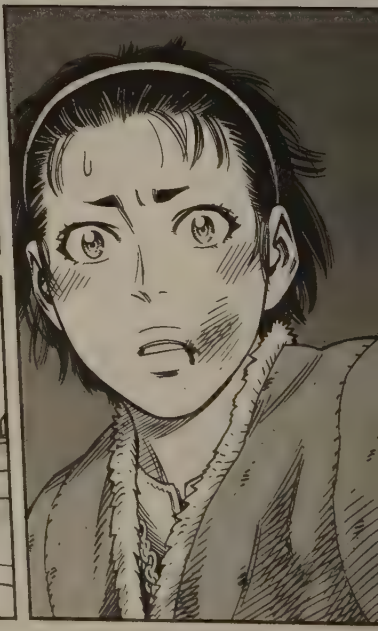

I HOPE IT'S NOT TOO PAIN-FUL...
MY LAST HUSBAND WENT OFF TO VINLAND AND DIED BEFORE WE DID ANYTHING.

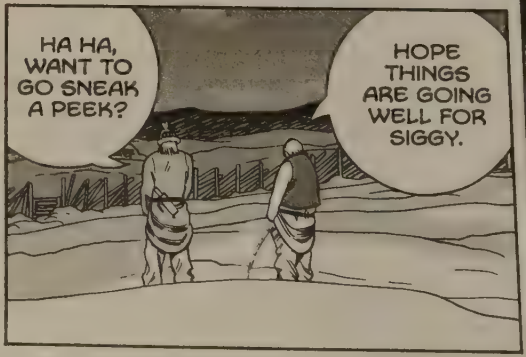

GSHK
AAAH!

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!

YOU BITCH...







SM
ACK

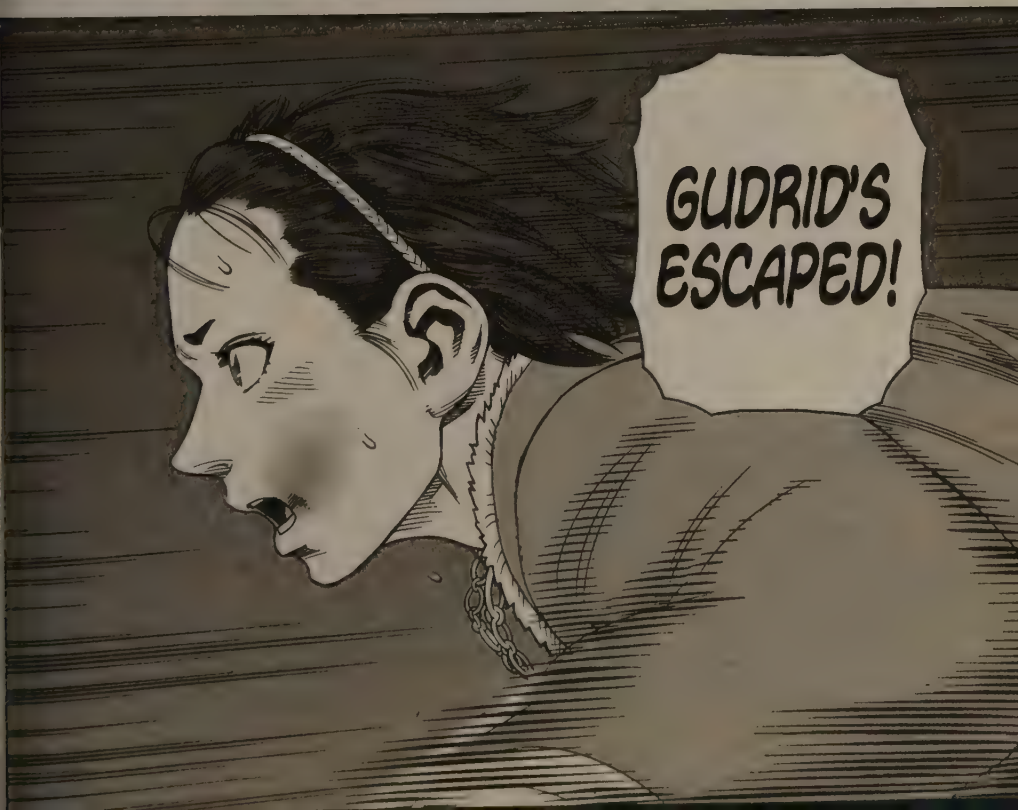
HRK...
UNGH...

SHIT!! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?!
GAH!
THUD

VINLAND SAGA MAP
THORFINN'S TRAVELS
THORFINN'S HOME VILLAGE
Thorfinn lived here until he was six, when he was thrown into battle.
YLVA
HELGA
Iceland (Reykjavik)
Sea of Norway
Faroes
Shetland
North Sea
Atlantic Ocean
Ireland
England
Danelaw
Wales
London
Thames R.
Normandy
Seine R.
Paris
Francia
Loire R.
Rhine R.
Weser R.
Elbe R.
Oder R.
Oslo
Denmark
Norway
Sweden
Gulf of Bothnia
Finland
Lake Ladoga
Gulf of Finland
Baltic Sea
W. Dvina R.
Vistula R.
GREENLAND
To the west of Iceland lies Greenland, on the south end of which is Brattahlid, home to Leif's farm. Gudrid went from this harsh location to Iceland in order to be married.
GUDRID
TULLA
HALFDAN'S FARM
A farm over the mountain from Thorfinn's village. Halfdan had a run-in with Thors and Thorfinn when the latter was just a boy.
HALFDAN
SIGURD
THORFINN
EINAR
BUG-EYED THORFINN
LEIF

DASH

DAMN IT!!
AFTER HER, YOU FOOLS!!
HUH? WAS THAT...?


GUDRID'S ESCAPED!

Greenland
Arctic Circle
Sea of Norway
Iceland
Faroes
START
Hálfdan's Farm
Thorfinn's Village
Brattahlid
(Leif's Farm)
To Vinland
England
SPECIAL
LET'S GO TO GREECE
PLANNED
EASTWARD
VOYAGE
Atlantic
Ocean
0 200 400 600 800 1000
(km)

Novgorod
Russia (Rus)
Caspian Sea
N. Dvina River
Dnieper River
Kiev
eden
Baltic Sea
Black Sea
nmark
Jomsborg
Ketil's Farm
Miklagard
(Istanbul Today)
Germany
Byzantine Empire
GOAL!
Aegean Sea
Greece
France
Mediterranean
Sea
Distant Deserts

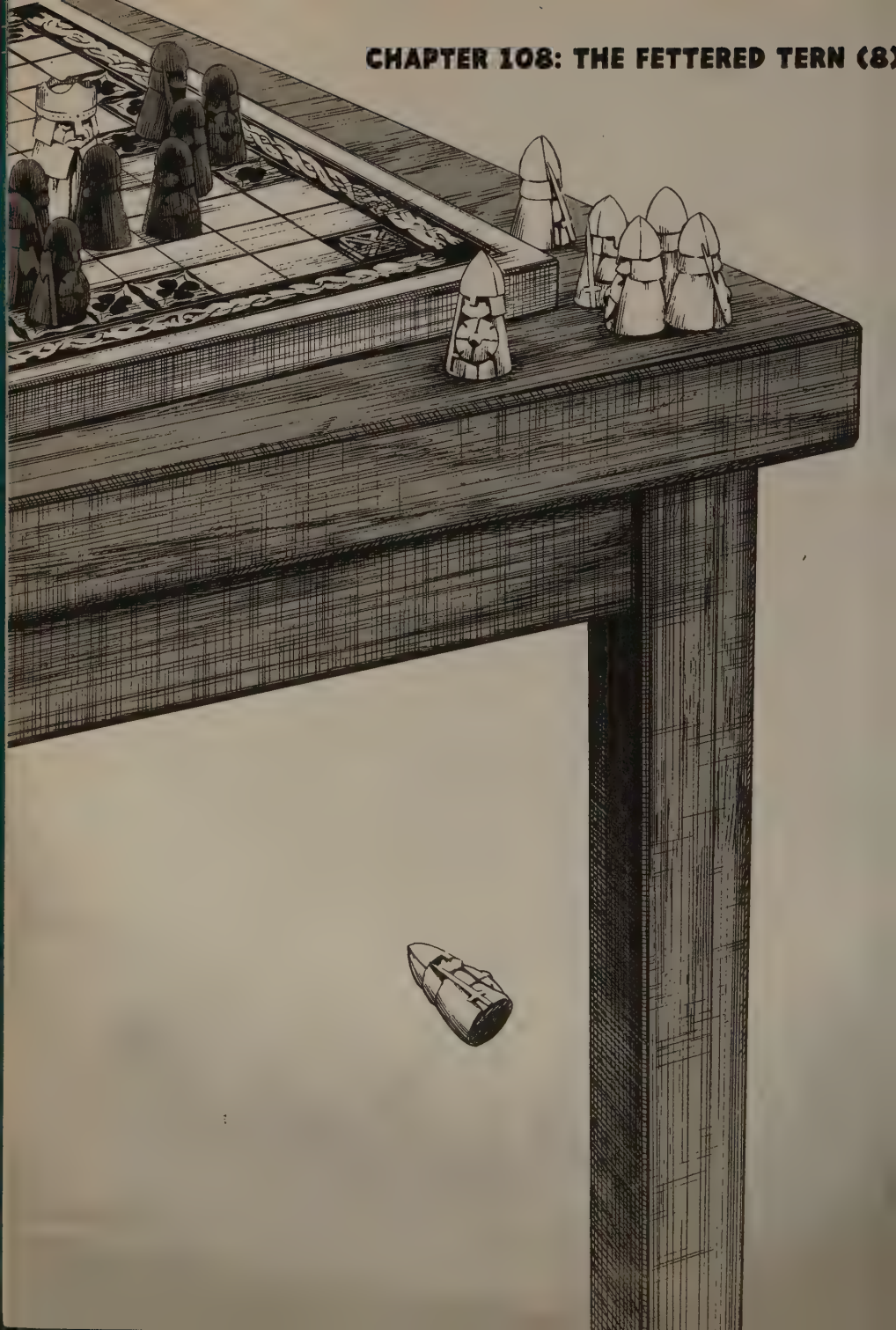
Even in 11th-century Scandinavia, there was a functioning minting system—gold and silver coins. Unlike today's money, which is bills backed by trust in central banks, the value of those coins was not in their shape or stamping, but their thickness and weight. So when buying something worth half a gold coin, they would actually cut the coin in half. Since the precious metals were rare in origin, this coinage wasn't present for every transaction—most trading was goods for goods. But even in those trades, there needed to be a standard recognized unit of value. In medieval Northern Europe, especially in Iceland, which had no minted coins, woven wool served the purpose of gold. In addition to being used for clothing, a piece of wool fabric 100 centimeters wide and 280 centimeters long was considered to have the same approximate value as 7 grams of silver in 13th-century Iceland. That made it a "currency commodity." Livestock could be a currency commodity, too—how many sheep would this cost? Textiles and livestock were vital parts of life, so they had significant value, making them a substitute for money. With that in mind, when I look at a 1,000-yen bill today, I can't help but think, "It's insane that this little slip of paper is worth the same as an extra large bowl of noodles with fried pork." It's just paper! The modern world is extremely strange.

MAKOTO YUKIMURA

VINLAND SAGA

ヴィンランド・サガ
VINLAND SAGA
MAKOTO YUKIMURA

CHAPTER 108: THE FETTERED TERN (8)



HUFF
HUFF
THUD
PHEW...!
ZSH

ZSH
ZSHK...

NOTHING HERE!

IS SHE OVER THERE?

GUDRIIID!

MISS-

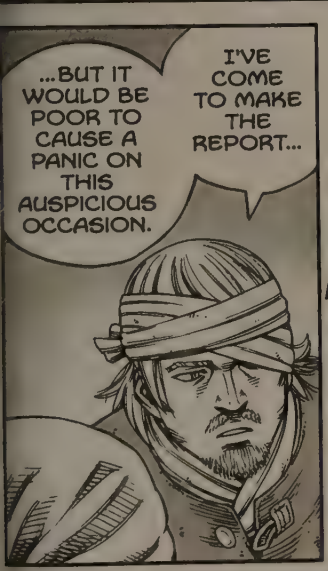
GONK

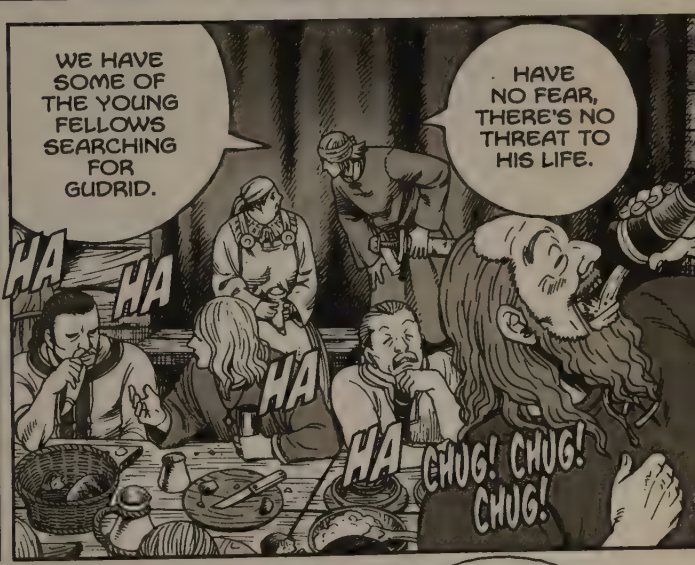
MISS GUDRIIID!

MISS GUDRID?

MISS GUDRIIID!

...MASTER SIGURD?!
GUDRID...
...STABBED...

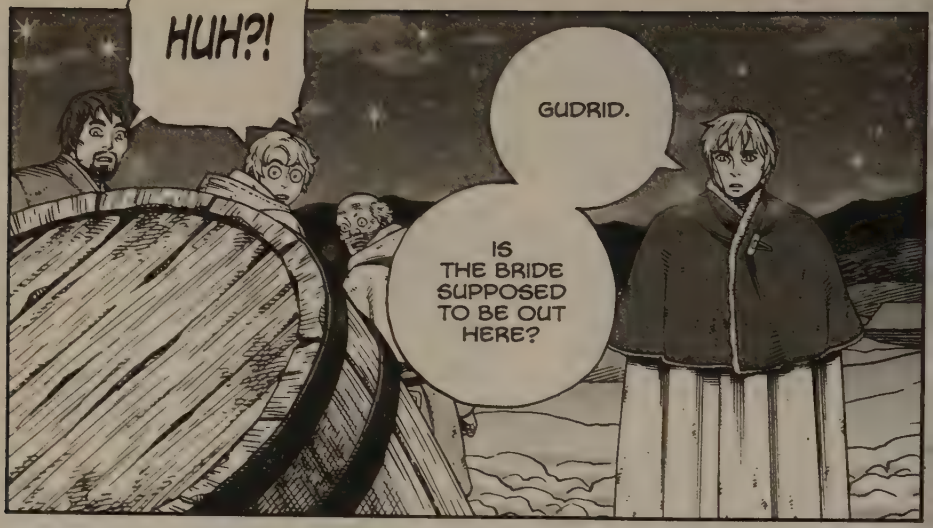

I'VE COME TO MAKE THE REPORT...
...BUT IT WOULD BE POOR TO CAUSE A PANIC ON THIS AUSPICIOUS OCCASION.

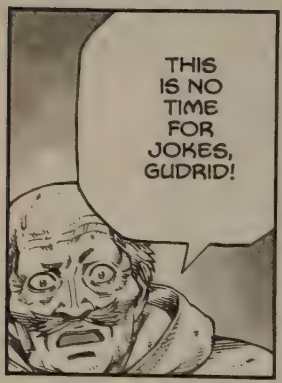

WE HAVE SOME OF THE YOUNG FELLOWS SEARCHING FOR GUDRID.
HAVE NO FEAR, THERE'S NO THREAT TO HIS LIFE.
HA
HA
HA
HA
CHUG! CHUG! CHUG!

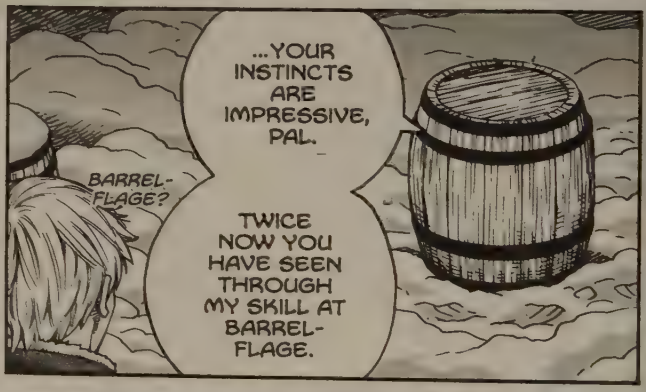
DO YOU HAVE ANY THOUGHTS ABOUT THIS, TULLA?
ANY REASONS WHY GUDRID WOULD HAVE DONE SUCH A THING...

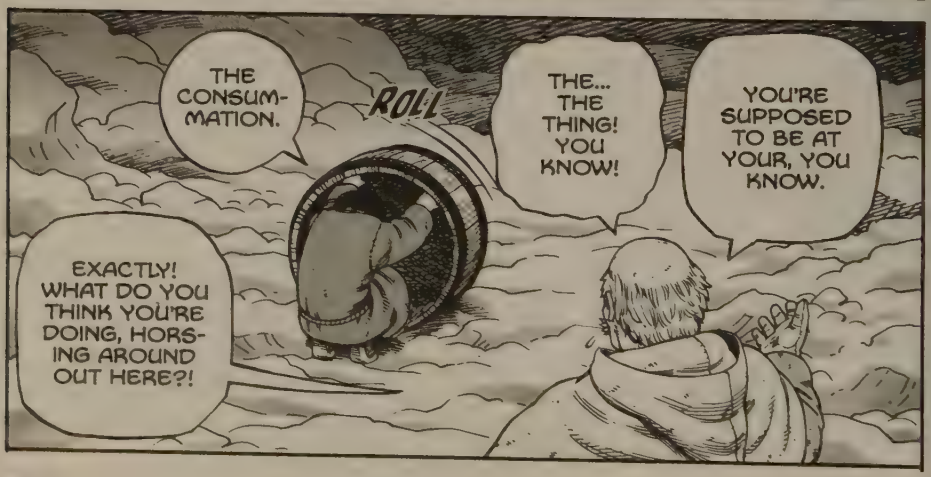
LET'S GET SOME SLEEP NOW; IT'S AN EARLY MORNING.
WE'RE ALL READY TO GO.
OKAY.
THERE.

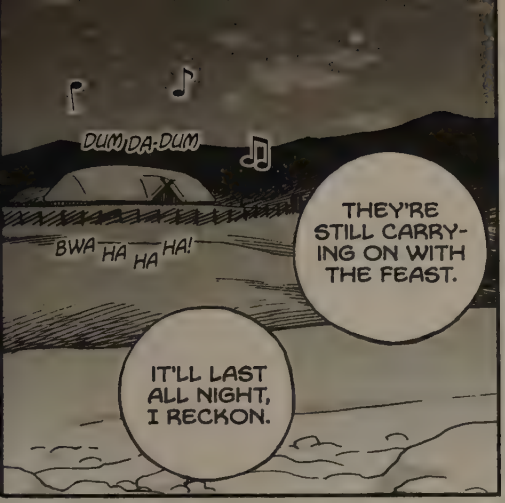
SHE STABBED ME AND RAN AWAY!!
DO YOU REALLY THINK SHE'S GOING TO COME WHEN CALLED?! USE YOUR HEAD, FOOL!!
SHE'LL HAVE LEFT PRINTS IN THE SNOW! USE THEM AND TRACK HER DOWN!
GIVEN THE CHILL, WE HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT GUDRID FREEZING!
SEARCH QUICKLY AND QUIETLY!
HOW ARE ALL OF YOU SO UNIFORMLY STUPID?!
SORRY, I THINK WE'VE RUN AROUND SO MUCH THAT WE'VE LOST SIGHT OF HERS.


HUH?!
GUDRID.
IS THE BRIDE SUPPOSED TO BE OUT HERE?

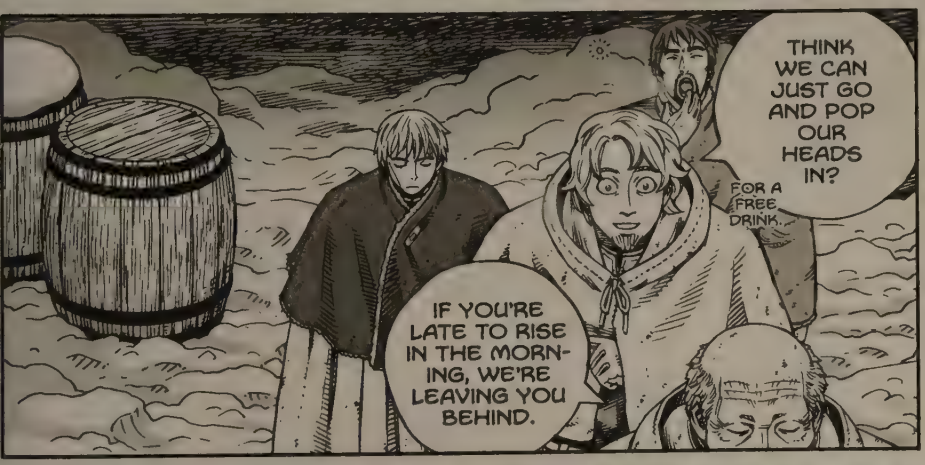

THIS IS NO TIME FOR JOKES, GUDRID!

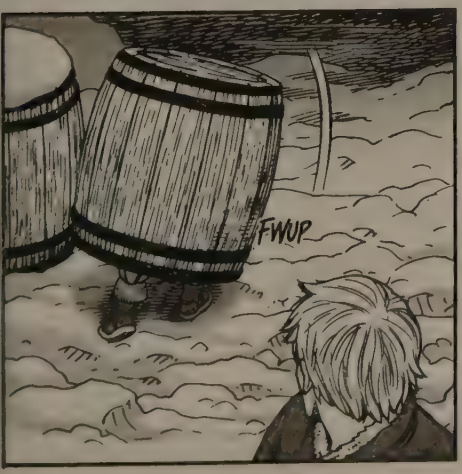

...YOUR INSTINCTS ARE IMPRESSIVE, PAL.
BARREL-FLAGE?
TWICE NOW YOU HAVE SEEN THROUGH MY SKILL AT BARREL-FLAGE.

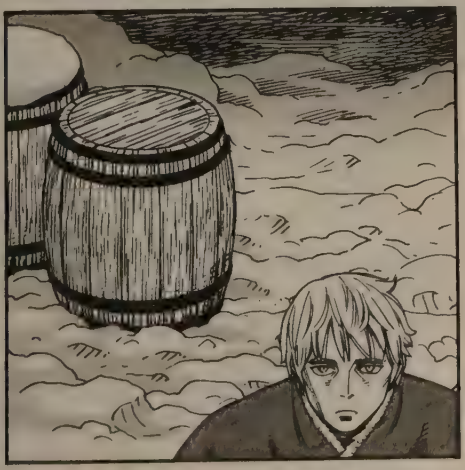

THE CONSUM-MATION.
ROLL
THE... THE THING! YOU KNOW!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE AT YOUR, YOU KNOW.
EXACTLY! WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, HORS-ING AROUND OUT HERE?!

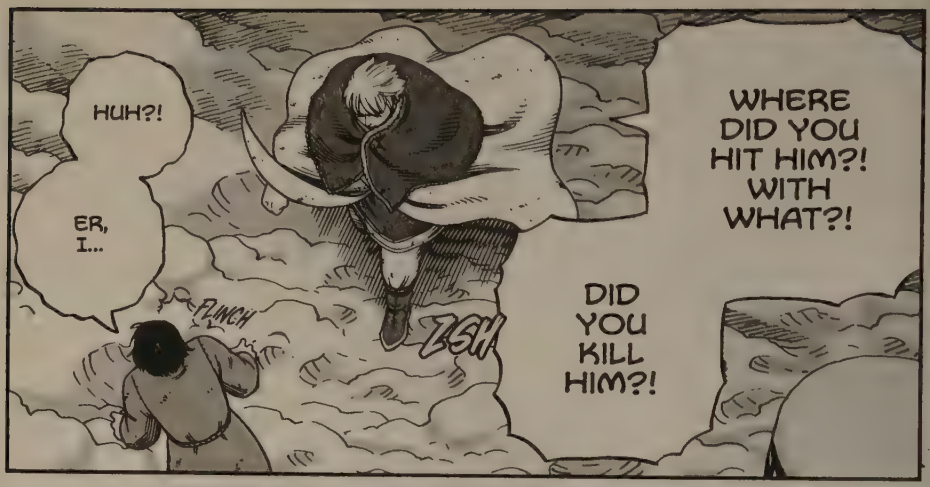

DUM DA-DUM
BWA HA HA HA!
THEY'RE STILL CARRYING ON WITH THE FEAST.
IT'LL LAST ALL NIGHT, I RECKON.

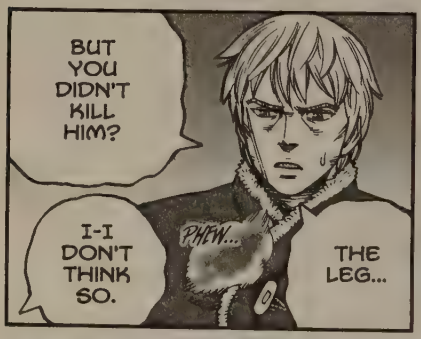
SPLASH
FSHHH

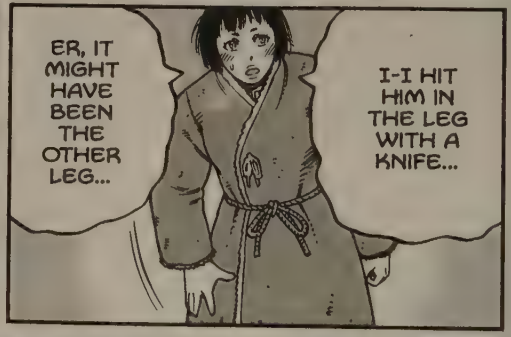

THINK WE CAN JUST GO AND POP OUR HEADS IN?
FOR A FREE DRINK...
IF YOU'RE LATE TO RISE IN THE MORNING, WE'RE LEAVING YOU BEHIND.


FWUP




HUH?!
ER, I...
FLINCH
ZSH
WHERE DID YOU HIT HIM?! WITH WHAT?!
DID YOU KILL HIM?!


BUT YOU DIDN'T KILL HIM?
I-I DON'T THINK SO.
PHEW...
THE LEG...


ER, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE OTHER LEG...
I-I HIT HIM IN THE LEG WITH A KNIFE...

WELL... EVEN I WAS SURPRISED WHEN IT HAPPENED.
THE NEXT THING I KNEW, "JAB!" THERE IT WAS...

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF SUCH A THING...
WHY... WOULD YOU...?

WELL, AS IT HAPPENS...

...I DON'T KNOW THAT I'LL BE ABLE TO RETURN...

COME AGAIN?

A FIGHT? OR YOU COULD SAY...

...I STABBED HIM.

PAT

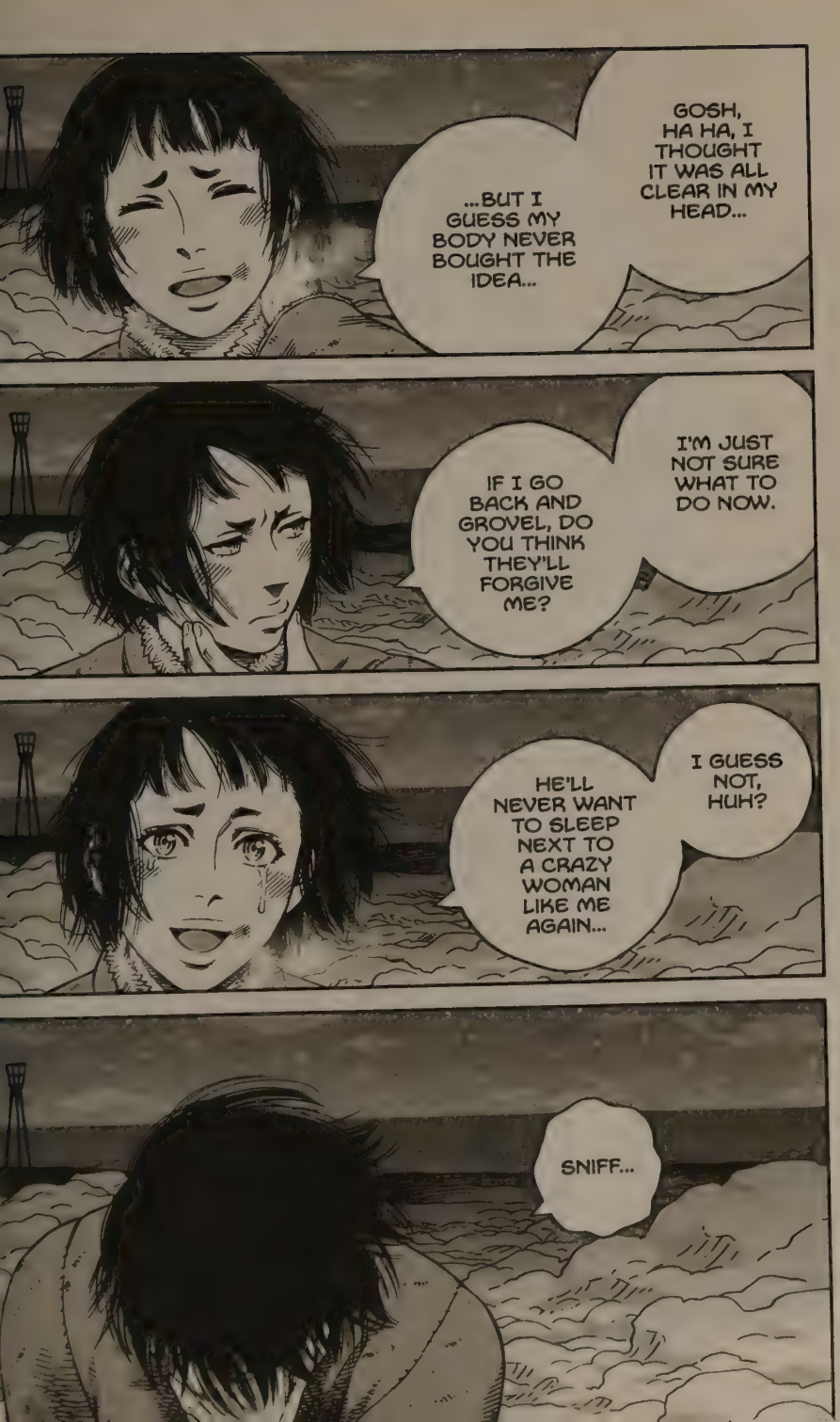
PAT

WHY?! DID YOU HAVE A FIGHT WITH SIGURD?

I STABBED...

...MY HUSBAND.

I–
I CAN'T...
...
GUDRID...
SKOAL!
BWA HA HA HA!
I CAN'T... DO THE THINGS...
...THAT EVERYONE ELSE... TAKES...
...FOR GRANTED...


GOSH, HA HA, I THOUGHT IT WAS ALL CLEAR IN MY HEAD...
...BUT I GUESS MY BODY NEVER BOUGHT THE IDEA...
I'M JUST NOT SURE WHAT TO DO NOW.
IF I GO BACK AND GROVEL, DO YOU THINK THEY'LL FORGIVE ME?
I GUESS NOT, HUH?
HE'LL NEVER WANT TO SLEEP NEXT TO A CRAZY WOMAN LIKE ME AGAIN...
SNIFF...

WHY CAN'T A WOMAN...
...BE A SAILOR?
WHY CAN'T I BE ALLOWED TO CHOOSE A LIFE FOR MYSELF?

THE THINGS THAT...

...TULLA DOES FOR ME...

...DON'T MAKE ME HAPPY...

I...

I KNOW I'M STUPID AND SELFISH AND WILLFUL.

BUT... BUT I CAN'T CHANGE THAT ABOUT MYSELF...

I WANT TO SAIL.

I WANT TO SEE THE WORLD.

I WASN'T BORN A WOMAN OUT OF CHOICE.

LET'S ADD HER TO THE CREW.

LEIF, EVERY-ONE.

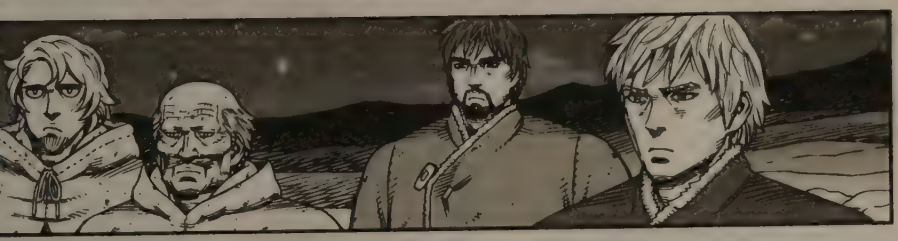
...

I HAD A FEELING YOU WOULD SAY THAT.

SHE STABBED SIGURD.

A PROUD NORSE WARRIOR, INJURED BY A WOMAN.

YOU... YOU MAKE IT SOUND SO SIMPLE...



YOU CAN.

BUT...
I WANT TO GO WITH YOU.
IF YOU'RE HESITATING ON MY ACCOUNT, THAT'S NOT IN YOUR NATURE.
"BUT..."
WHAT?

WE SHOULD TAKE GUDRID ON BOARD AND LEAVE AT ONCE.
SHE WILL NOT FARE WELL, RETURNING TO THE FOLD.
IT WOULD BE BEST TO ALLOW THE ANGER TO SUBSIDE.
BLOOD HAS ALREADY BEEN SHED.
BLOOD WILL BE SHED.
WILL YOU STILL COME WITH US?
WE ARE GOING TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH, GUDRID.
THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT WE WILL RETURN ALIVE.
ZSH

YOUR GLOVES AND BELT ARE INSIDE.

YOU FORGOT SOME-THING.

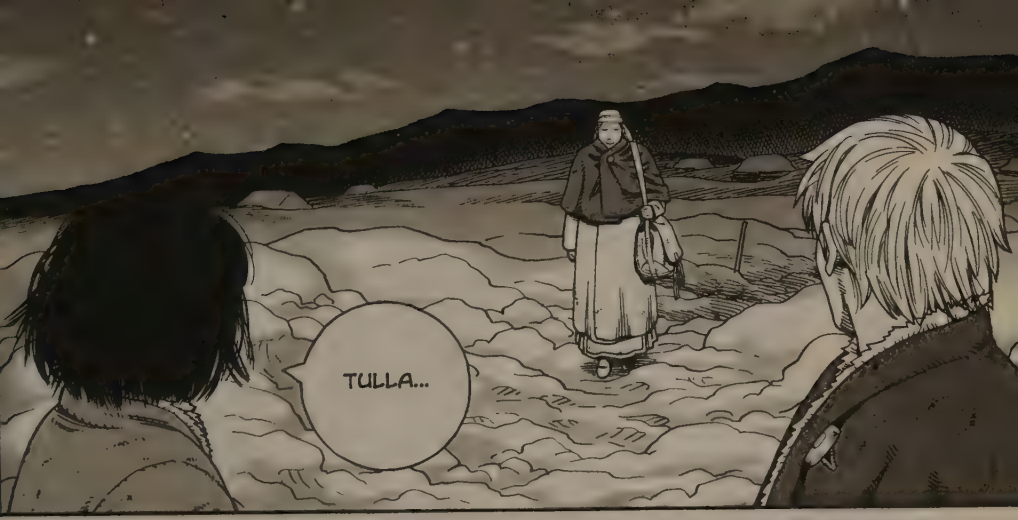
SISTER...

...

BUT... IT SEEMS THAT I WAS WRONG THIS TIME.

I FIGURED THAT AS TIME PASSED HERE ON THIS FARM...

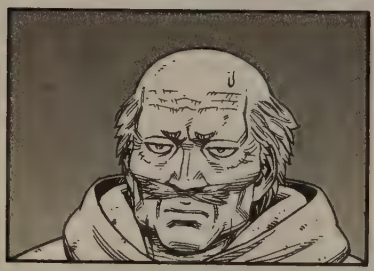
...YOU WOULD GROW USED TO IT, AS YOU DID WITH US.

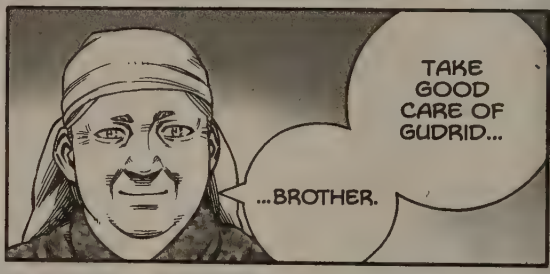

TULLA...

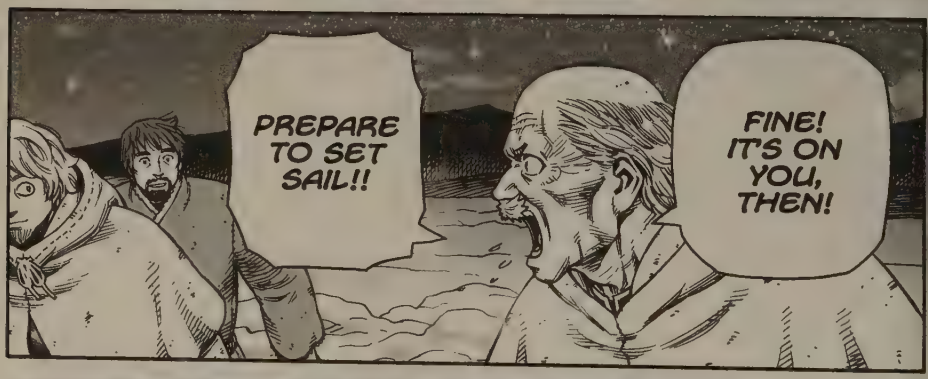
ALL THESE MEN AND THEIR BLINDNESS TO THE OBVIOUS.
TO THINK, NONE OF THEM CONSIDERED COMING STRAIGHT TO THE DOCK.
THE PEOPLE FROM THE FARM HAVEN'T SPOTTED YOU HERE YET.

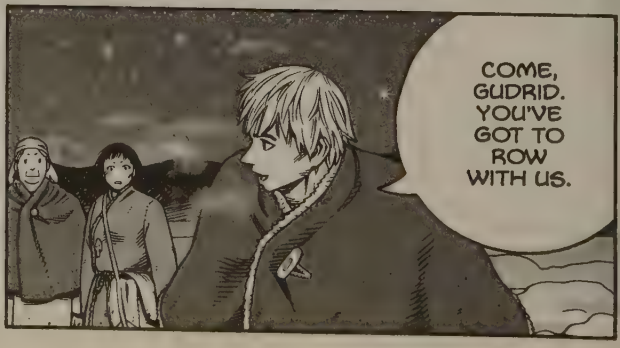
...BUT I SUPPOSE I SHOULD SPEAK FOR MYSELF...

JUST GET IN YOUR SHIP AND GET OUT OF HERE.
WHAT-EVER IT IS, SO BE IT.
BUT... WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO, EXACTLY?

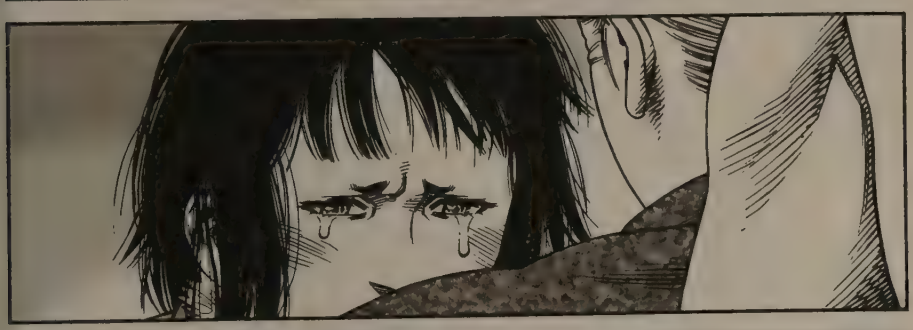


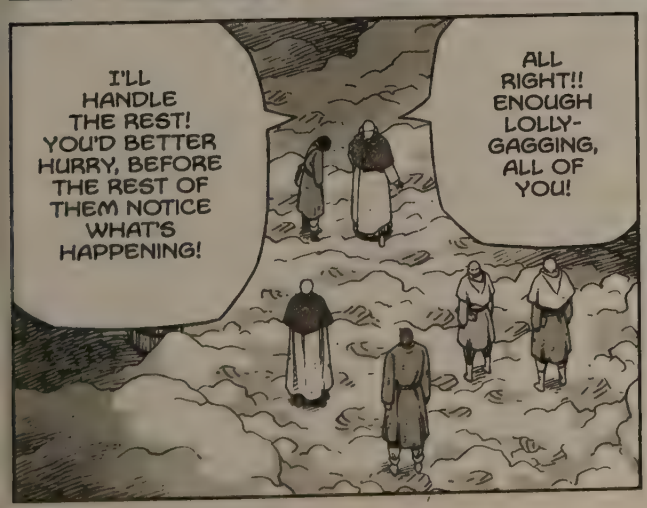

TAKE GOOD CARE OF GUDRID...
...BROTHER.


PREPARE TO SET SAIL!!
FINE! IT'S ON YOU, THEN!


COME, GUDRID. YOU'VE GOT TO ROW WITH US.

GO WHERE YOU WILL, MY GIRL.
I'M SORRY FOR PUTTING SO MUCH PRESSURE ON YOU.




I'LL HANDLE THE REST! YOU'D BETTER HURRY, BEFORE THE REST OF THEM NOTICE WHAT'S HAPPENING!
ALL RIGHT!! ENOUGH LOLLY-GAGGING, ALL OF YOU!

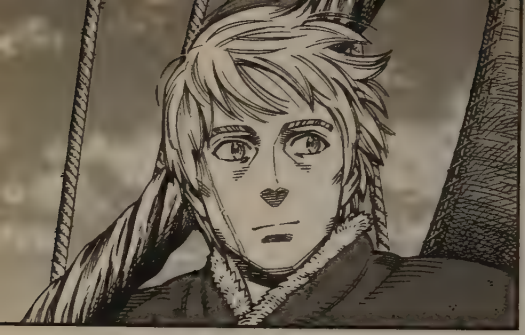
TAKE CARE OF YOUR-SELF.

I'M SORRY THAT I WASN'T BETTER-BEHAVED!!

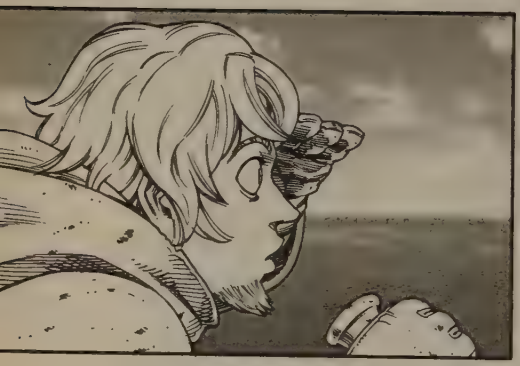
SISTER!

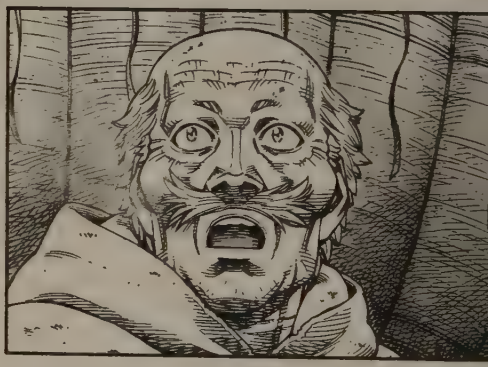
SPLASH

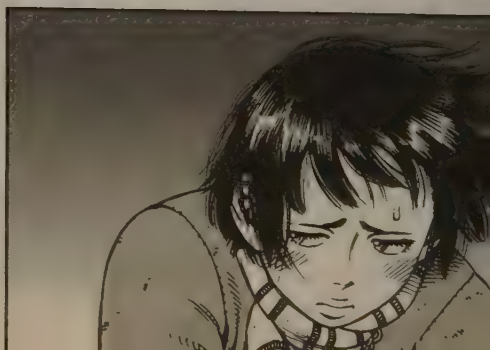
ZSHH...

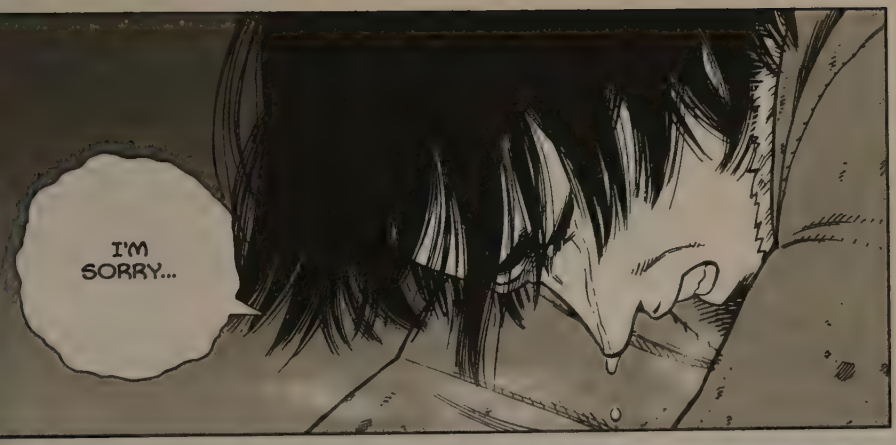


CHAPTER 109: THE LIBERATED TERN








I'M SORRY...

MY FAMILY...

...HAS NEVER SUFFERED SUCH AN INSULT BEFORE.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY FOR YOURSELF, SIGURD?

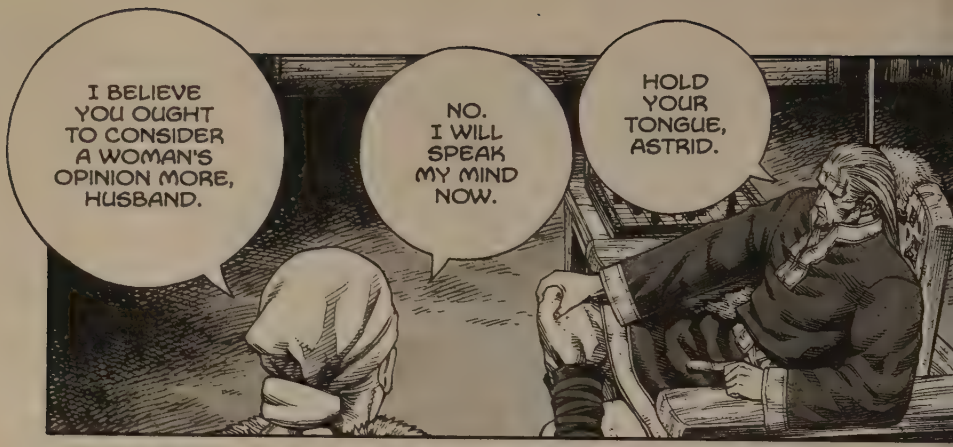
STABBED BY YOUR OWN WIFE, AND HAVING HER SLIP THROUGH YOUR FINGERS.

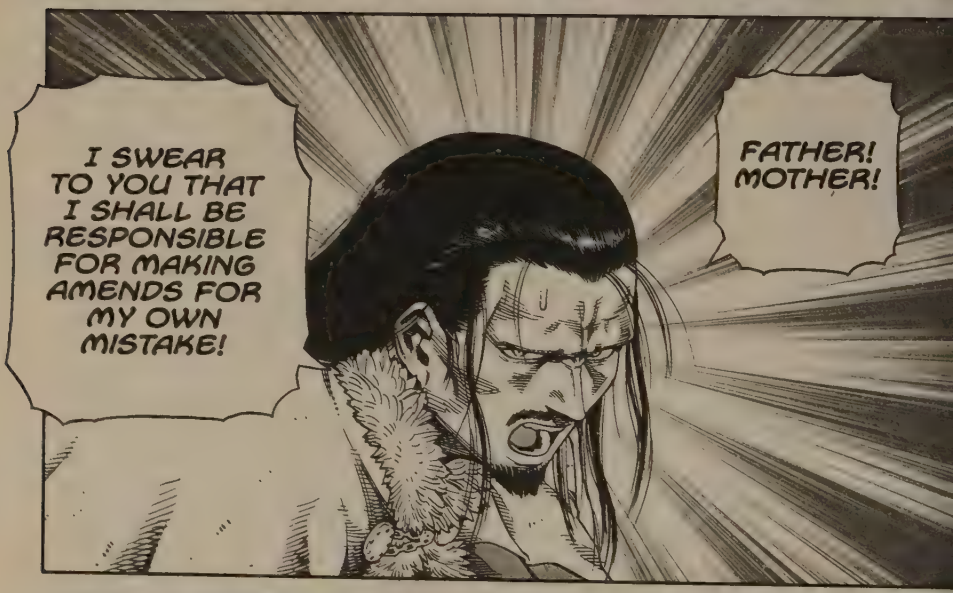
THE FAULT OF ALL OF THIS LIES IN US...

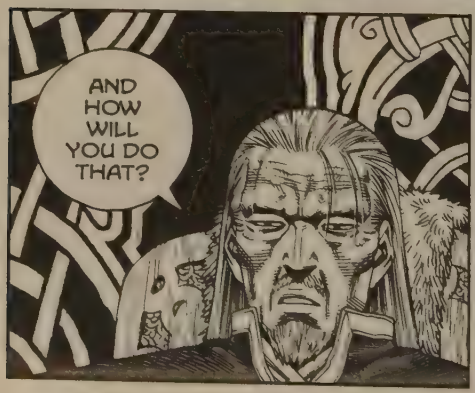
NO, NO! WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!

SIR...

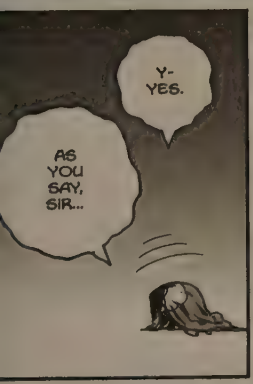
IT REP-RESENTS A LIFETIME OF SHAME FOR ME...

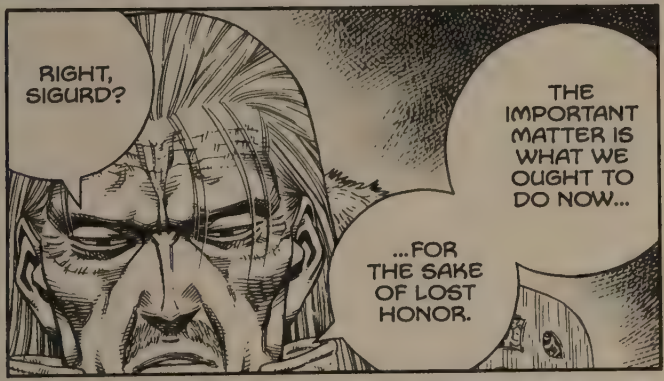

I BELIEVE YOU OUGHT TO CONSIDER A WOMAN'S OPINION MORE, HUSBAND.
NO. I WILL SPEAK MY MIND NOW.
HOLD YOUR TONGUE, ASTRID.


I SWEAR TO YOU THAT I SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING AMENDS FOR MY OWN MISTAKE!
FATHER! MOTHER!

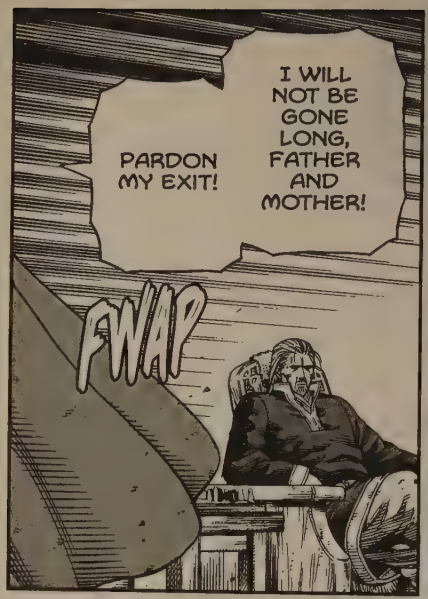

AND HOW WILL YOU DO THAT?

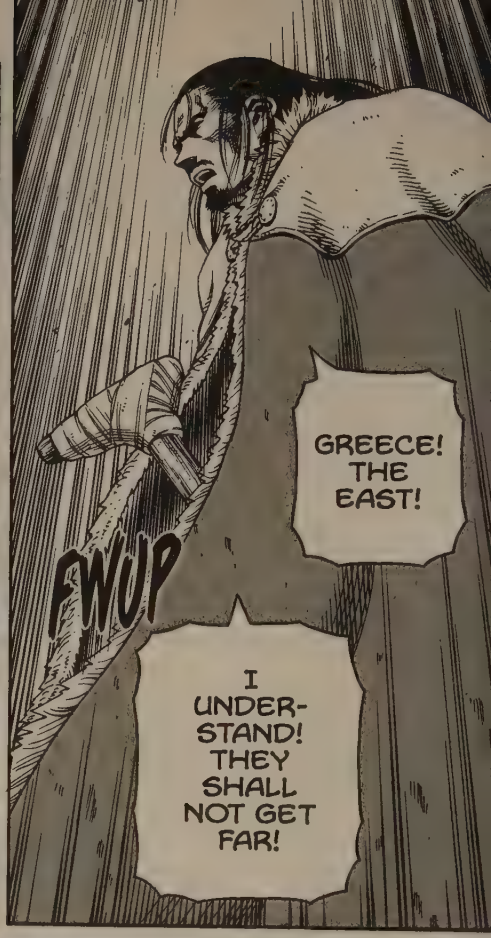
THIS INCIDENT CANNOT BE COVERED UP. OUR FAMILY WILL BE MADE A LAUGHING-STOCK.
THAT IS NOT HOW SOCIETY WILL SEE IT, TULLA.
IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT GUDRID THOUGHT WHEN SHE DID IT.

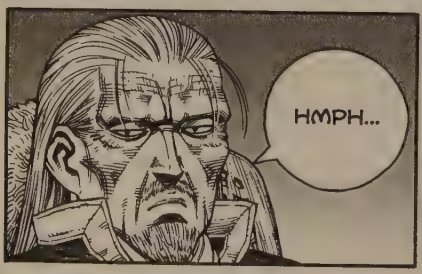

Y-YES.
AS YOU SAY, SIR...

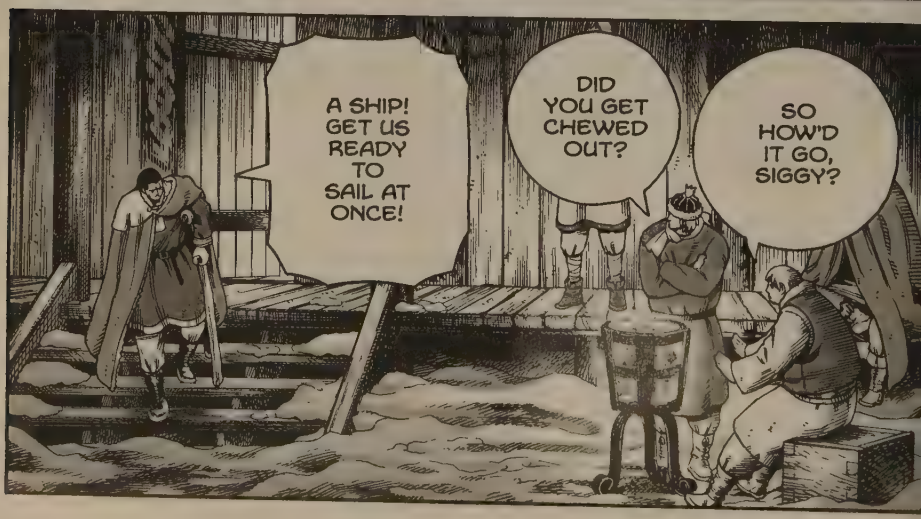

RIGHT, SIGURD?
THE IMPORTANT MATTER IS WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO NOW...
...FOR THE SAKE OF LOST HONOR.

IF WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE CAUSE, WE ARE CERTAIN TO FAIL AGAIN.
I HAPPEN TO BE INTERESTED IN WHAT GUDRID WAS THINKING, MY HUSBAND.


PARDON MY EXIT!
I WILL NOT BE GONE LONG, FATHER AND MOTHER!
FWAP

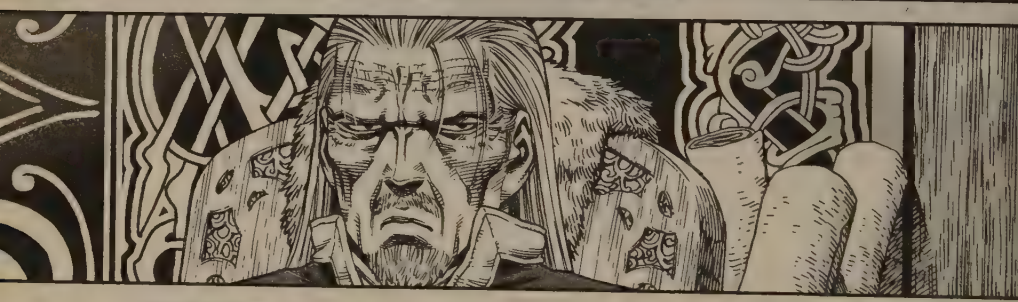

GREECE! THE EAST!
FWOP
I UNDER-STAND! THEY SHALL NOT GET FAR!

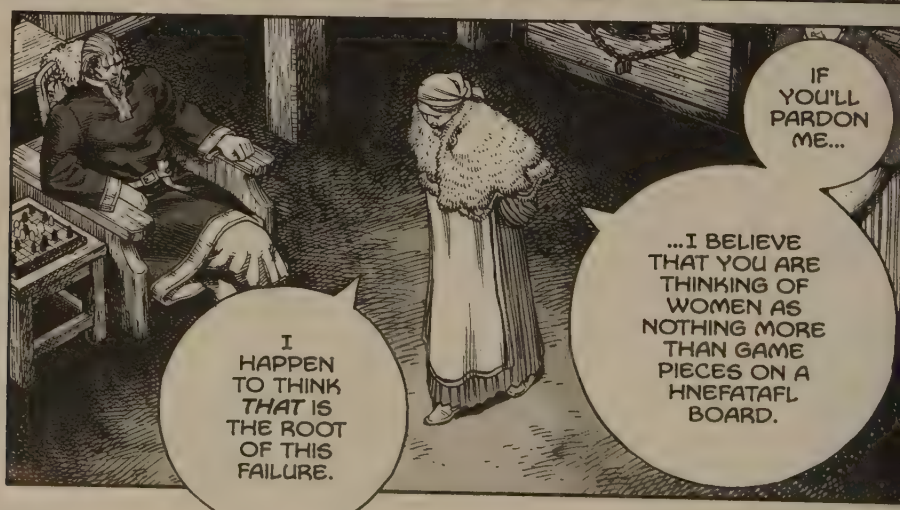

HMPH...


A SHIP! GET US READY TO SAIL AT ONCE!
DID YOU GET CHEWED OUT?
SO HOW'D IT GO, SIGGY?

AND I SHALL NOT SET FOOT ON THIS LAND AGAIN WITHOUT HER!
I WILL TRACK DOWN...
...MY WIFE, GUDRID!
WRONG.
...BACK TO GREEN-LAND–
DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY WENT?
...
THORFINN'S GROUP MUST HAVE ALREADY LEFT FOR GREECE, IN ORDER TO EARN THE GOLD NECESSARY TO SETTLE IN VINLAND.
EAST.

PERSONALLY, I THINK THE FAULT LIES WITH YOU, HUSBAND.
IS THAT A FACT?




I HAPPEN TO THINK *THAT* IS THE ROOT OF THIS FAILURE.
IF YOU'LL PARDON ME...
...I BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE THINKING OF WOMEN AS NOTHING MORE THAN GAME PIECES ON A HNEFATAFL BOARD.

THORFINN... I *KNEW* HE WAS A KID-NAPPER AFTER ALL!!

THE PRICE FOR SHAMING SIGURD WILL BE DEAR, INDEED!!

AS YOU HEARD FROM HIM, WE SHALL WAIT FOR SIGURD'S RETURN TO SETTLE THE MATTER OF DIVORCE OR NOT.

NOW... TULLA.

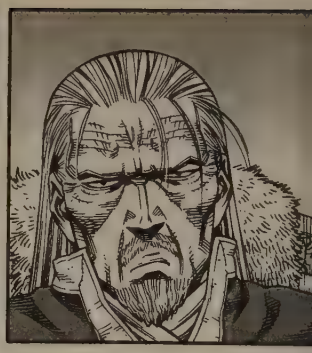
YOU ARE COR-RECT...

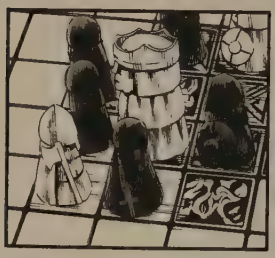
Y... YES...

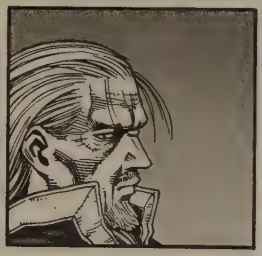
OUR FAMILY IS THE VICTIM OF THIS INCIDENT.

WE SHALL HAVE TO DEFINE THE EXTERNAL BEARER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MATTER.

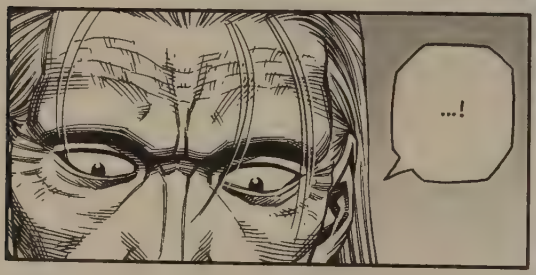
HOW-EVER, WE WILL REQUIRE SOME KIND OF REPARATION FOR THE PRESENT MOMENT.







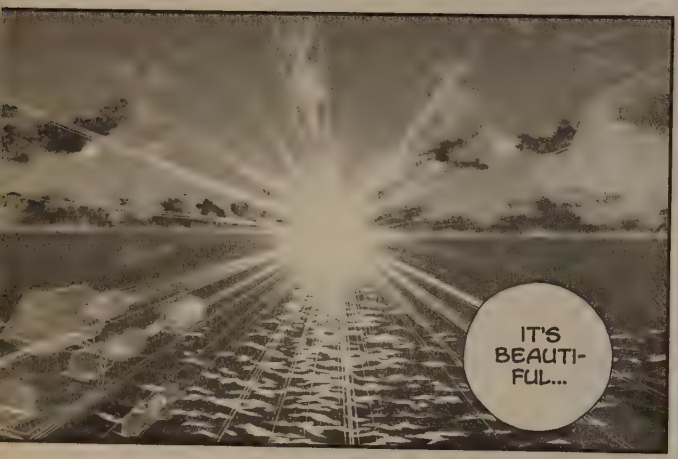
CHECK!
TAP

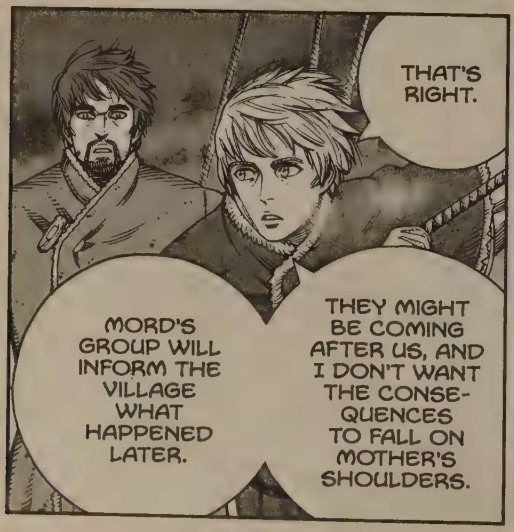

...!

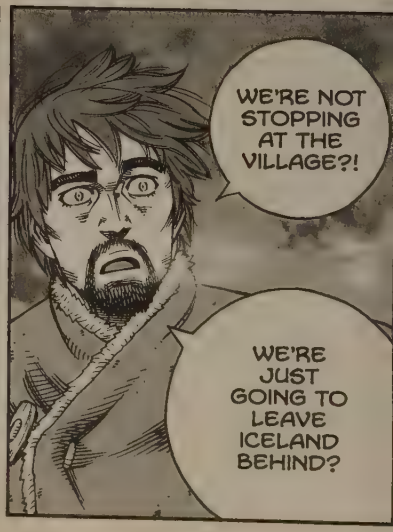
SHE SIMPLY CHOOSES TO ENGAGE IN THE MAN'S GAME MOST OF THE TIME.
DO NOT FORGET THIS.
A WOMAN HAS HER OWN FREE WILL.

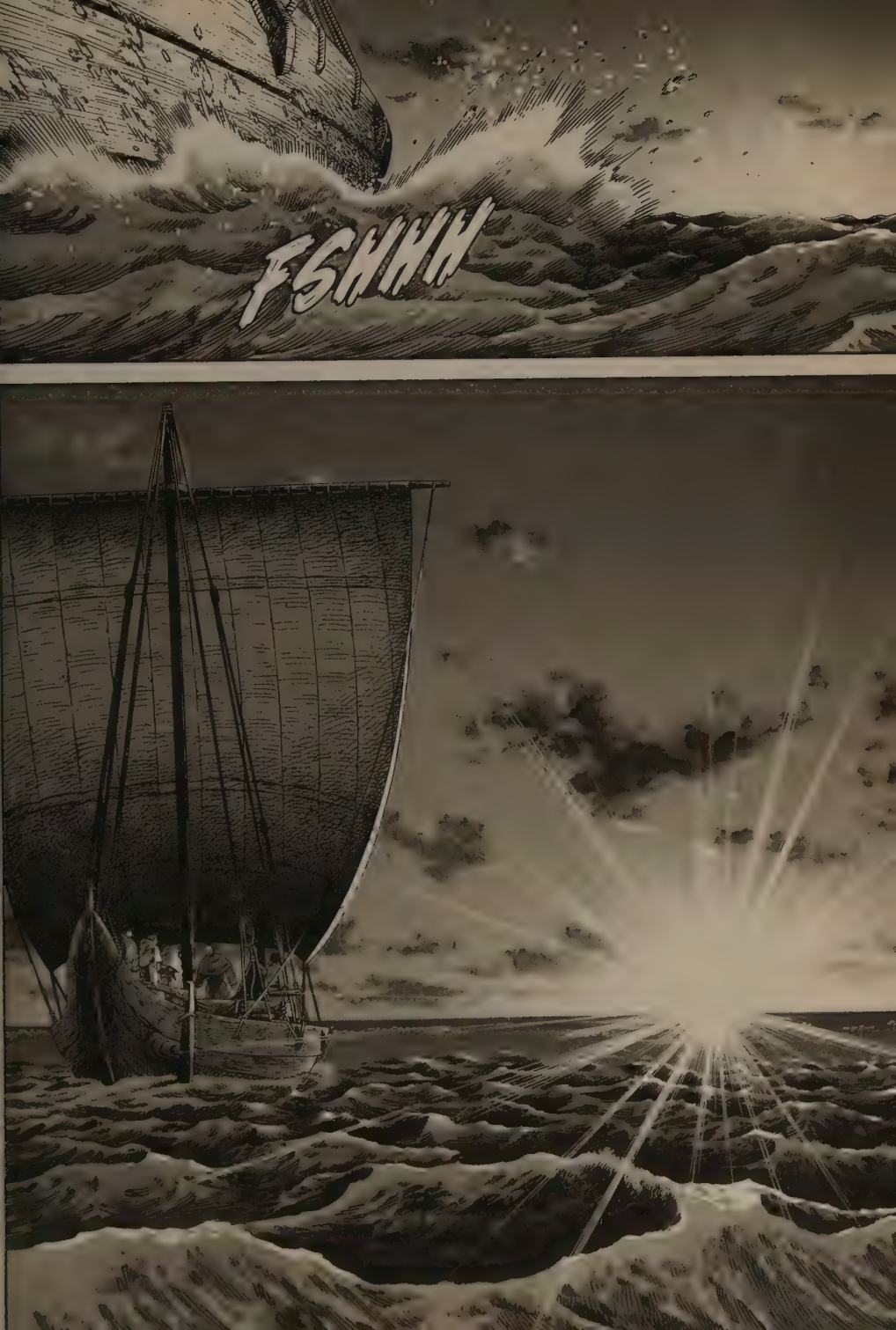
WHAT WOULD HAPPEN...
...IF EACH AND EVERY PIECE IN THIS GAME HAD ITS OWN HEART AND MIND?
"I'M TIRED OF BEING ORDERED AROUND!"
"I WOULD RATHER LEAVE THIS BOARD AND SEE THE GREATER WORLD!"
"I HAVE MY OWN WILL!"
PERHAPS THIS PIECE THINKS...

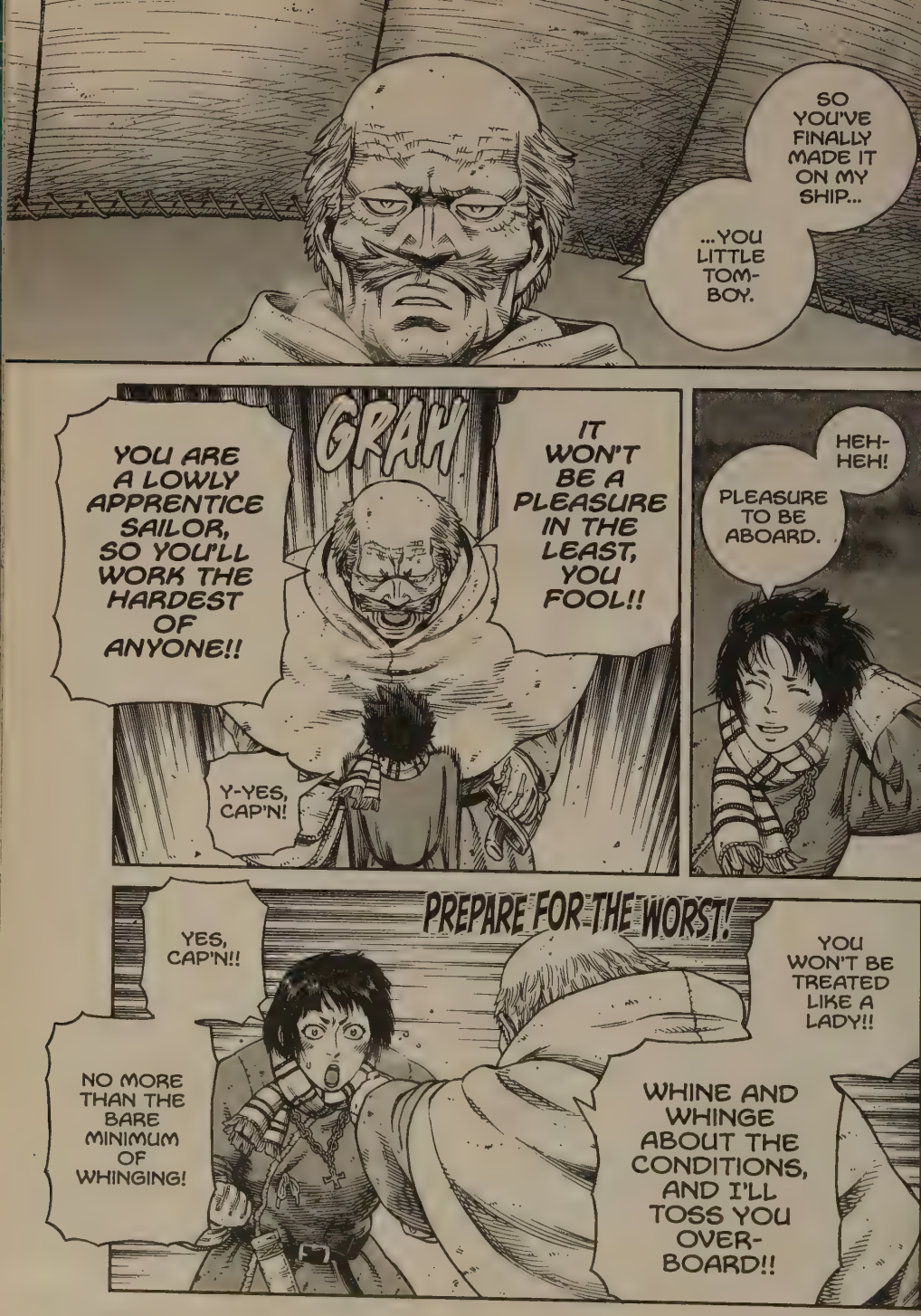
ZSHHHH

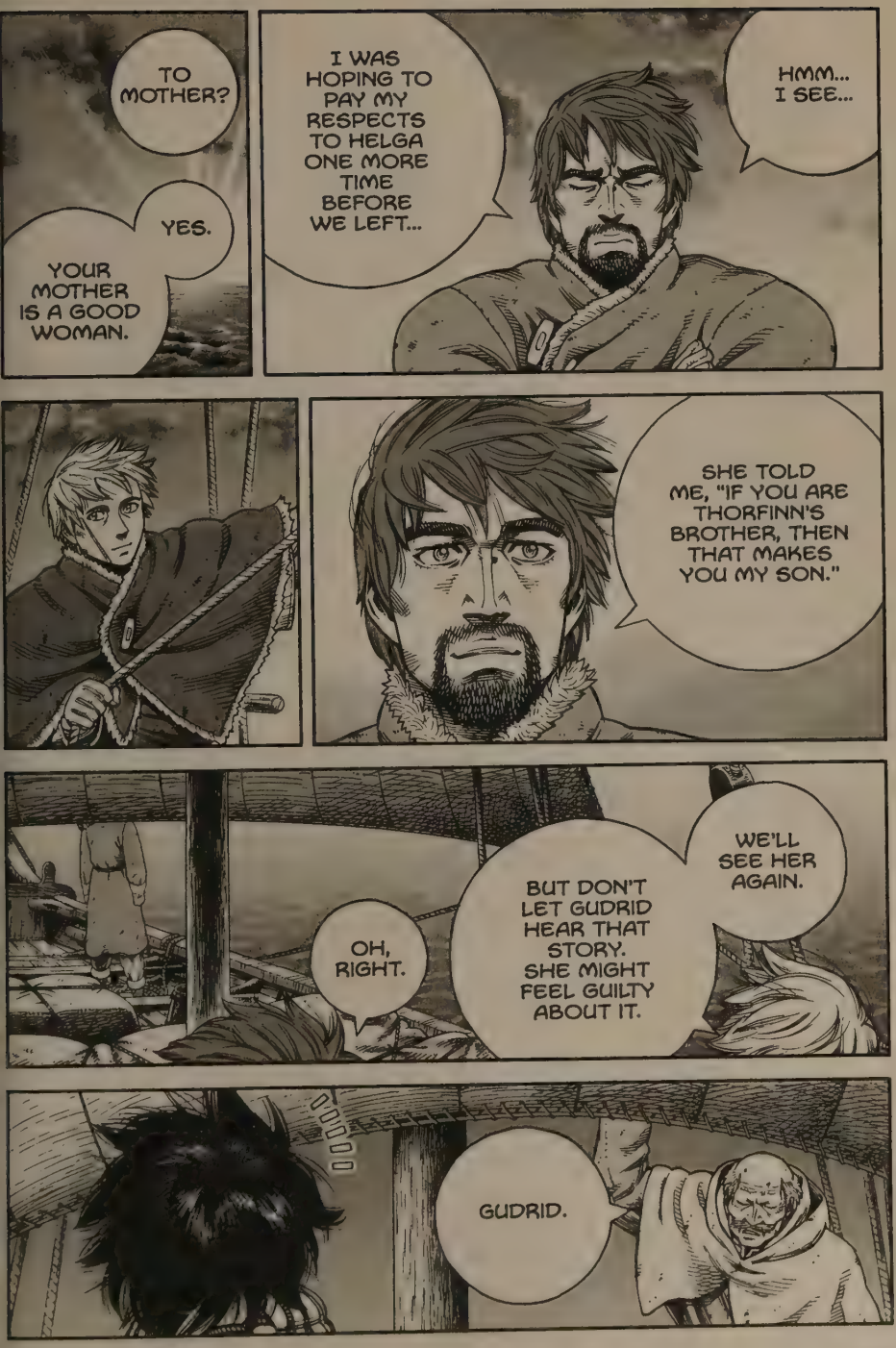

IT'S BEAUTI-FUL...


THAT'S RIGHT.
MORD'S GROUP WILL INFORM THE VILLAGE WHAT HAPPENED LATER.
THEY MIGHT BE COMING AFTER US, AND I DON'T WANT THE CONSE-QUENCES TO FALL ON MOTHER'S SHOULDERS.

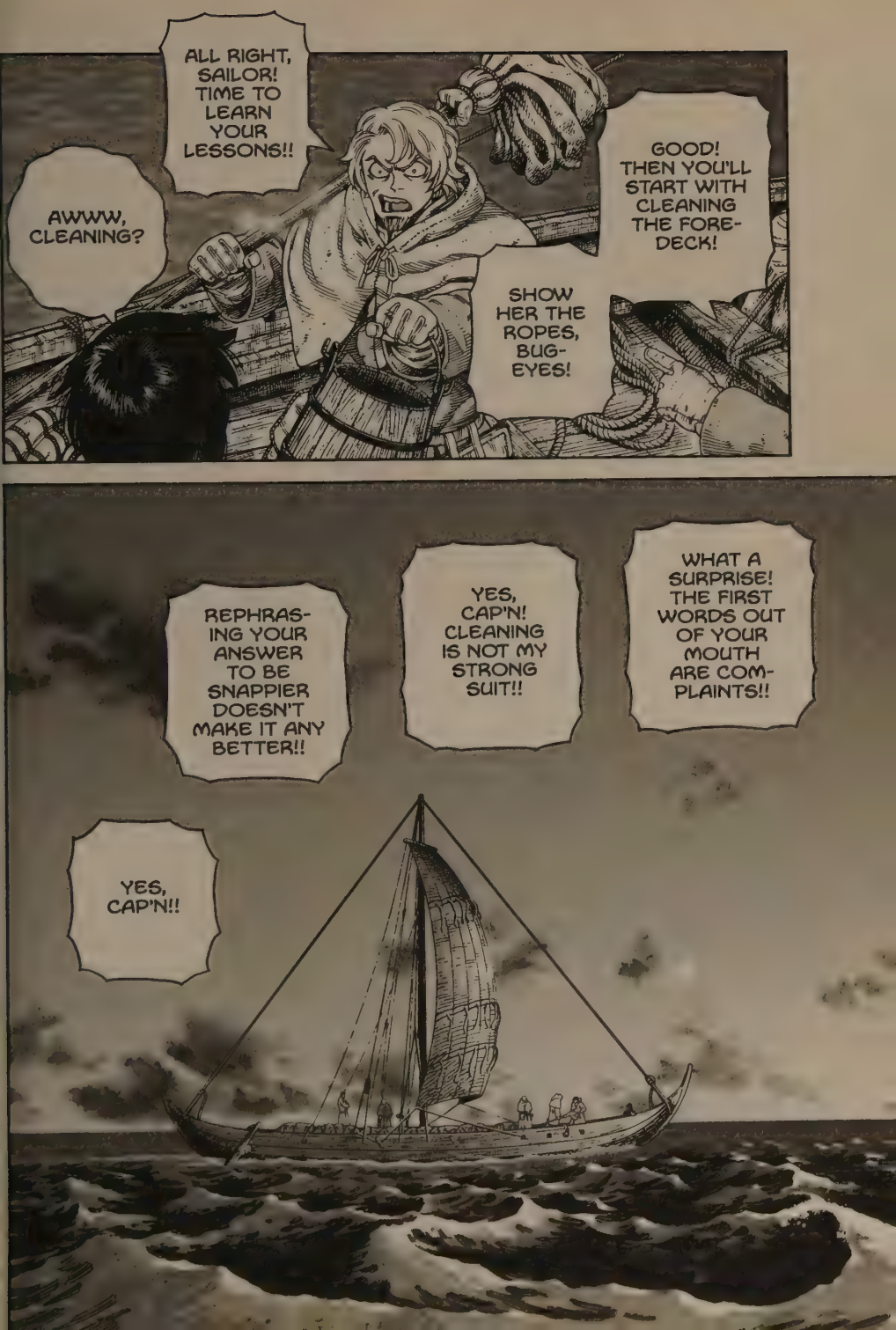

WE'RE NOT STOPPING AT THE VILLAGE?!
WE'RE JUST GOING TO LEAVE ICELAND BEHIND?


FSHHH


SO YOU'VE FINALLY MADE IT ON MY SHIP...
...YOU LITTLE TOM-BOY.
GRAH
YOU ARE A LOWLY APPRENTICE SAILOR, SO YOU'LL WORK THE HARDEST OF ANYONE!!
IT WON'T BE A PLEASURE IN THE LEAST, YOU FOOL!!
Y-YES, CAP'N!
HEH-HEH!
PLEASURE TO BE ABOARD.
PREPARE FOR THE WORST!
YES, CAP'N!!
YOU WON'T BE TREATED LIKE A LADY!!
NO MORE THAN THE BARE MINIMUM OF WHINGING!
WHINE AND WHINGE ABOUT THE CONDITIONS, AND I'LL TOSS YOU OVER-BOARD!!


TO MOTHER?
YES.
YOUR MOTHER IS A GOOD WOMAN.
I WAS HOPING TO PAY MY RESPECTS TO HELGA ONE MORE TIME BEFORE WE LEFT...
HMM... I SEE...
SHE TOLD ME, "IF YOU ARE THORFINN'S BROTHER, THEN THAT MAKES YOU MY SON."
WE'LL SEE HER AGAIN.
BUT DON'T LET GUDRID HEAR THAT STORY. SHE MIGHT FEEL GUILTY ABOUT IT.
OH, RIGHT.
GUDRID.

CHAPTER 110: CROSSING THE NORTH SEA


ALL RIGHT, SAILOR! TIME TO LEARN YOUR LESSONS!!
AWWW, CLEANING?
GOOD! THEN YOU'LL START WITH CLEANING THE FORE-DECK!
SHOW HER THE ROPES, BUG-EYES!
REPHRASING YOUR ANSWER TO BE SNAPPIER DOESN'T MAKE IT ANY BETTER!!
YES, CAP'N! CLEANING IS NOT MY STRONG SUIT!!
WHAT A SURPRISE! THE FIRST WORDS OUT OF YOUR MOUTH ARE COMPLAINTS!!
YES, CAP'N!!

RAAAH
AAAH
H

ZMMF
OSHK

SPARE MY BABY...
NOT HIM...
BABAM BAM
FWUM
TH-THUD

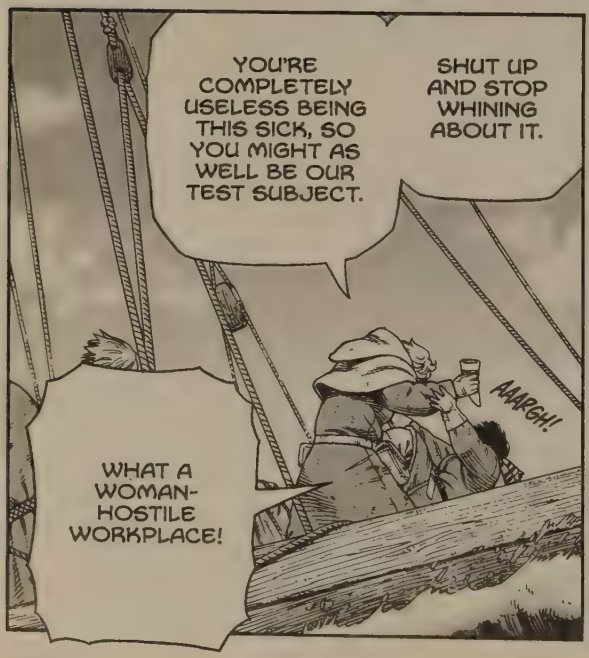
AAAAHH
ZMMF
GRRRR
WOWF
WOWF
WOWF
WOWF
WOWF
WOWF
THUD
RAAAHHH

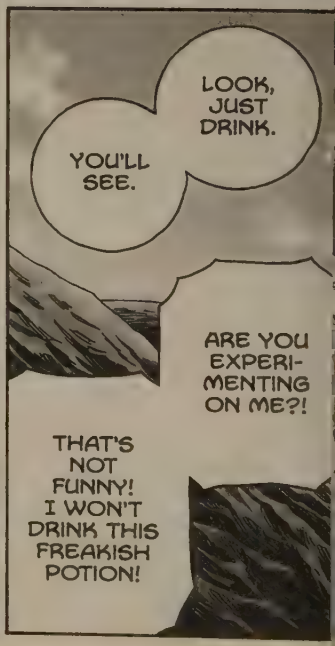
UUUUGH...
GAAA-EEEHH...
WHOHHH.
SWAY
SWAY
SWAY...
AAAAH.
OH, STOP! PLEASE, PLEASE, STOP, STOP, STOP!
I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY, I HLURG-LUUURGH!
BLURP BLORP BLAH
EVEN HER SEA-SICKNESS IS ANNOY-ING.

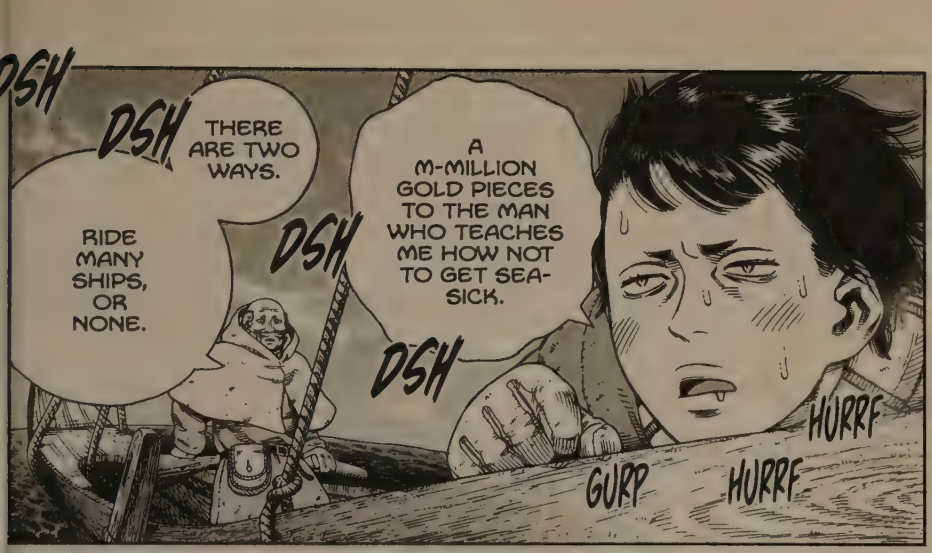
DSSSHHH
DSSSHHH
NORTH ATLANTIC
NEAR THE FAROE
ISLANDS
DECEMBER 1018

THE GREEKS KNOW IT AS A WONDER PANACEA TO CURE ALL ILLS.
VERY EXPENSIVE STUFF. YOU'RE LUCKY.

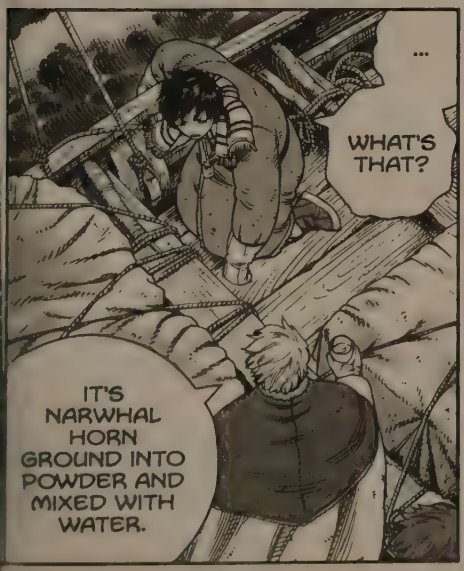
...SEASICKNESS IS AN ILLNESS?
IS THAT HOW YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DRINK THAT STUFF?
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT AMOUNT?

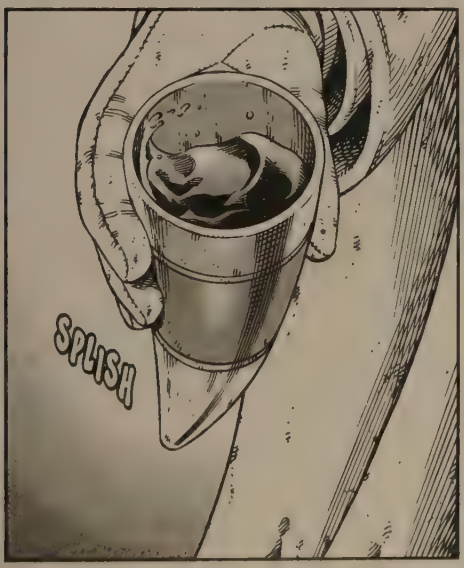

SHUT UP AND STOP WHINING ABOUT IT.
YOU'RE COMPLETELY USELESS BEING THIS SICK, SO YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE OUR TEST SUBJECT.
AAARGH!
WHAT A WOMAN-HOSTILE WORKPLACE!


LOOK, JUST DRINK.
YOU'LL SEE.
ARE YOU EXPERIMENTING ON ME?!
THAT'S NOT FUNNY! I WON'T DRINK THIS FREAKISH POTION!


DSH
DSH
THERE ARE TWO WAYS.
RIDE MANY SHIPS, OR NONE.
DSH
A M-MILLION GOLD PIECES TO THE MAN WHO TEACHES ME HOW NOT TO GET SEA-SICK.
DSH
HURRF
GURP
HURRF

WE DO HAVE MEDICINE.
!
PAT
GLURK! BLURF! HURRRL!
NOT THAT! I MEAN PRACTICAL WAYS! LIKE MEDICINE, OR... HURRP!

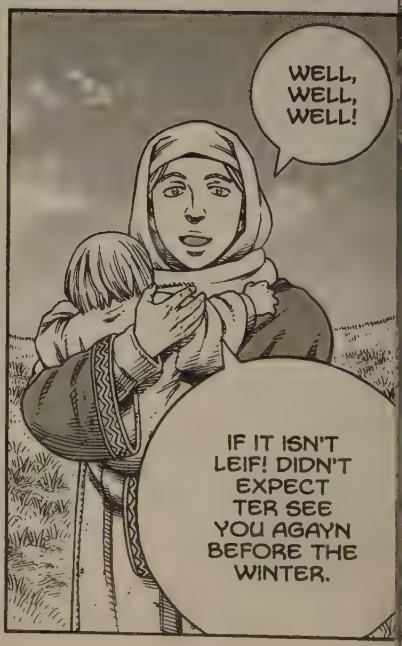

...
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S NARWHAL HORN GROUND INTO POWDER AND MIXED WITH WATER.

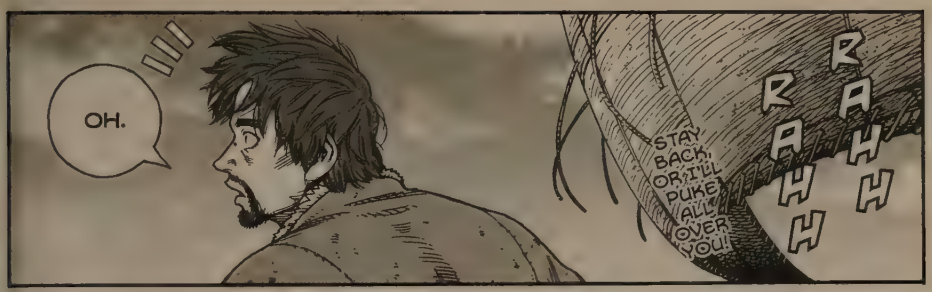

SPLISH

FAROE ISLANDS STREYMOY

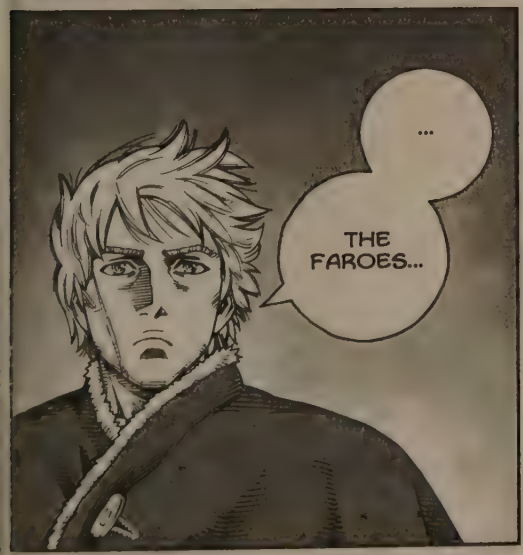
FSHAAA

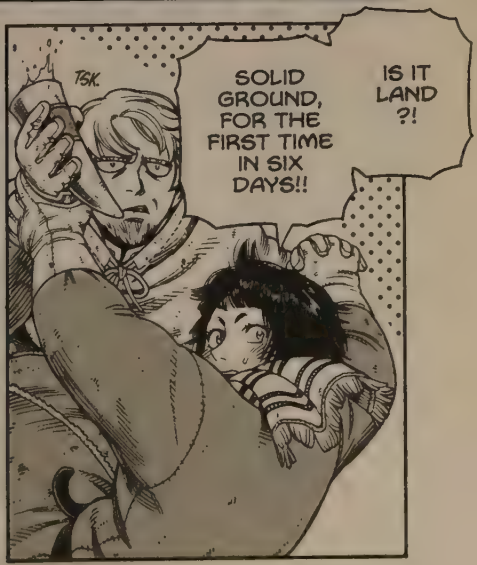
DSSHH

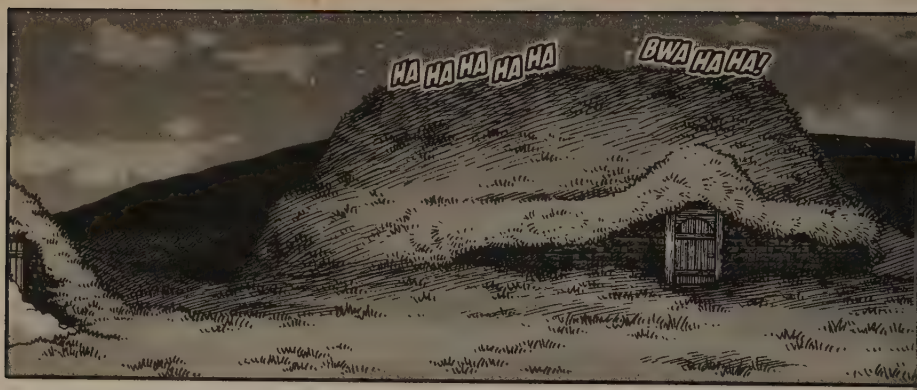



OH.
!!!!
STAY BACK, OR I'LL PUKE ALL OVER YOU!
RAHH
RAHH

THE FAROES.
YOU'RE IN LUCK, GUDRID. NO NEED TO DRINK THAT STUFF.


...
THE FAROES...

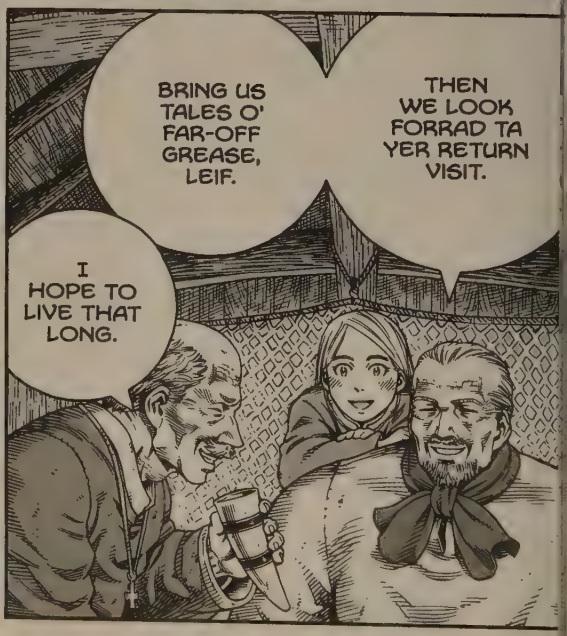

TSK.
SOLID GROUND, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SIX DAYS!!
IS IT LAND ?!

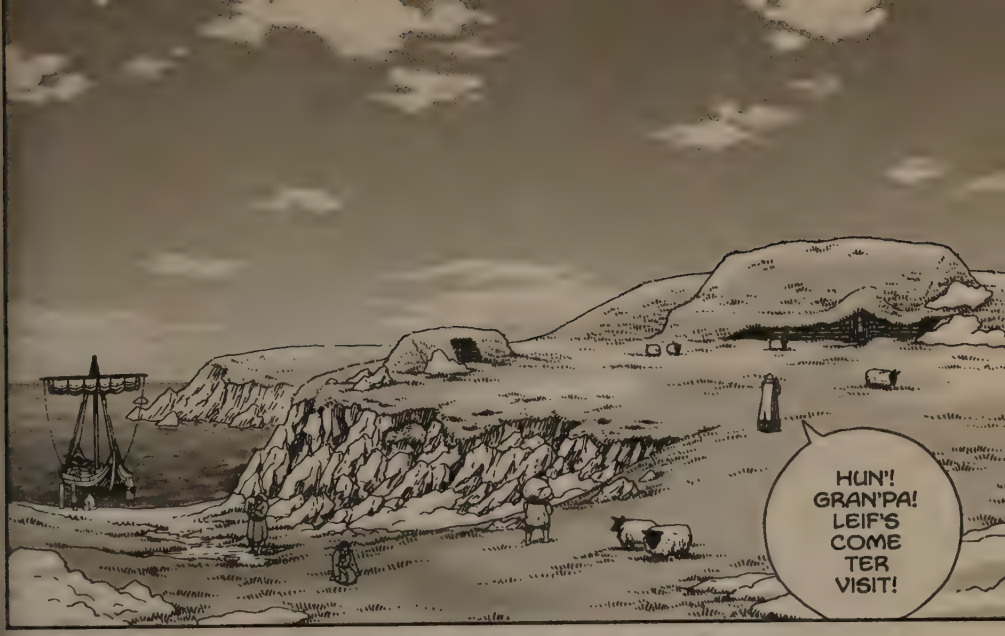

HA HA HA HA HA
BWA HA HA!

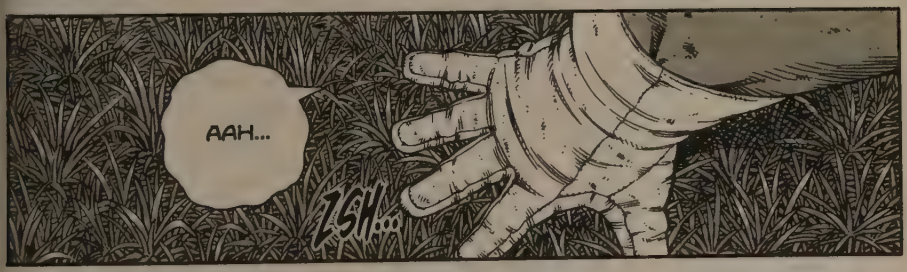
INDEED! QUITE AN ADVEN-TURE.
AHHH, GREASE, YE SAY?
IS IT A FAHR TRIP?

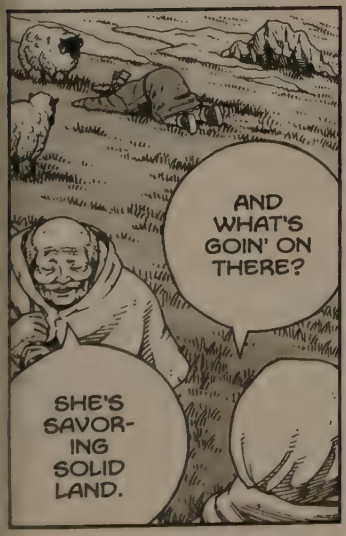
HA HA HA HA HA

WHOOSH...

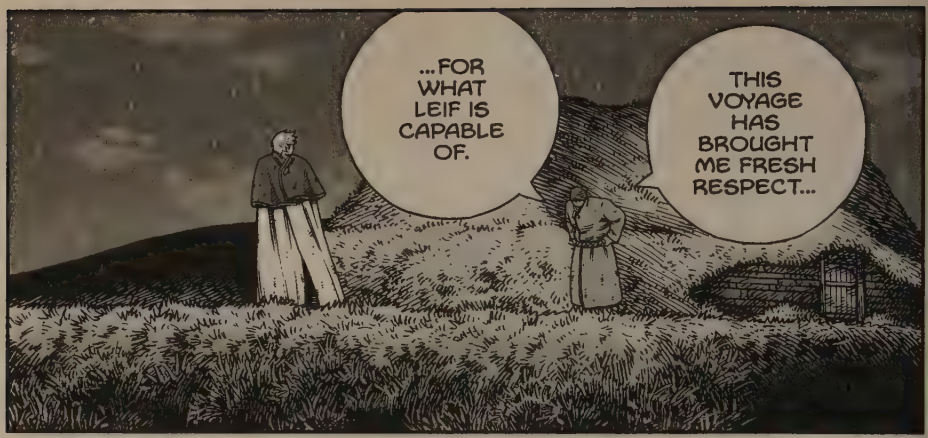

BRING US TALES O' FAR-OFF GREASE, LEIF.
THEN WE LOOK FORRAD TA YER RETURN VISIT.
I HOPE TO LIVE THAT LONG.

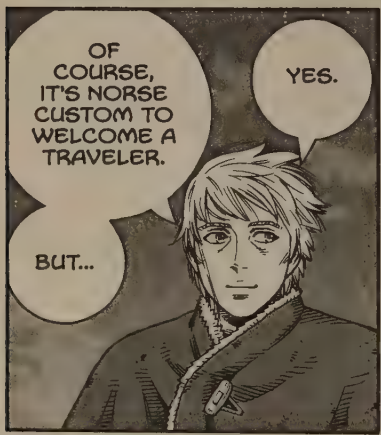

HUN'! GRAN'PA! LEIF'S COME TER VISIT!

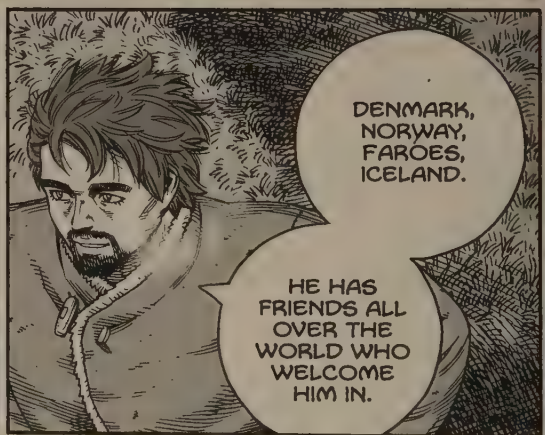

AAH...
ZSH


AND WHAT'S GOIN' ON THERE?
SHE'S SAVOR-ING SOLID LAND.

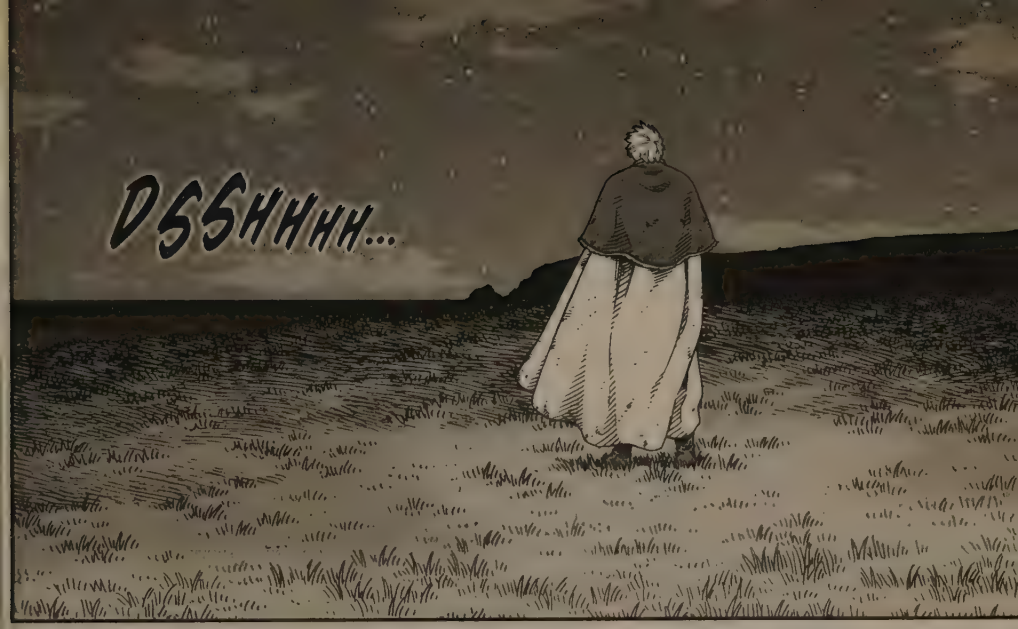
IT'S SO FIRM...
NO ROCK-ING.


...FOR WHAT LEIF IS CAPABLE OF.
THIS VOYAGE HAS BROUGHT ME FRESH RESPECT...


OF COURSE, IT'S NORSE CUSTOM TO WELCOME A TRAVELER.
YES.
BUT...


DENMARK, NORWAY, FAROES, ICELAND.
HE HAS FRIENDS ALL OVER THE WORLD WHO WELCOME HIM IN.

IT'S NOT JUST HIS SKILL WITH THE BOAT THAT MAKES HIM SUCH A VETERAN TRAVELER, I SUPPOSE.
EVEN MORE THAN THAT, HE IS LIKABLE.

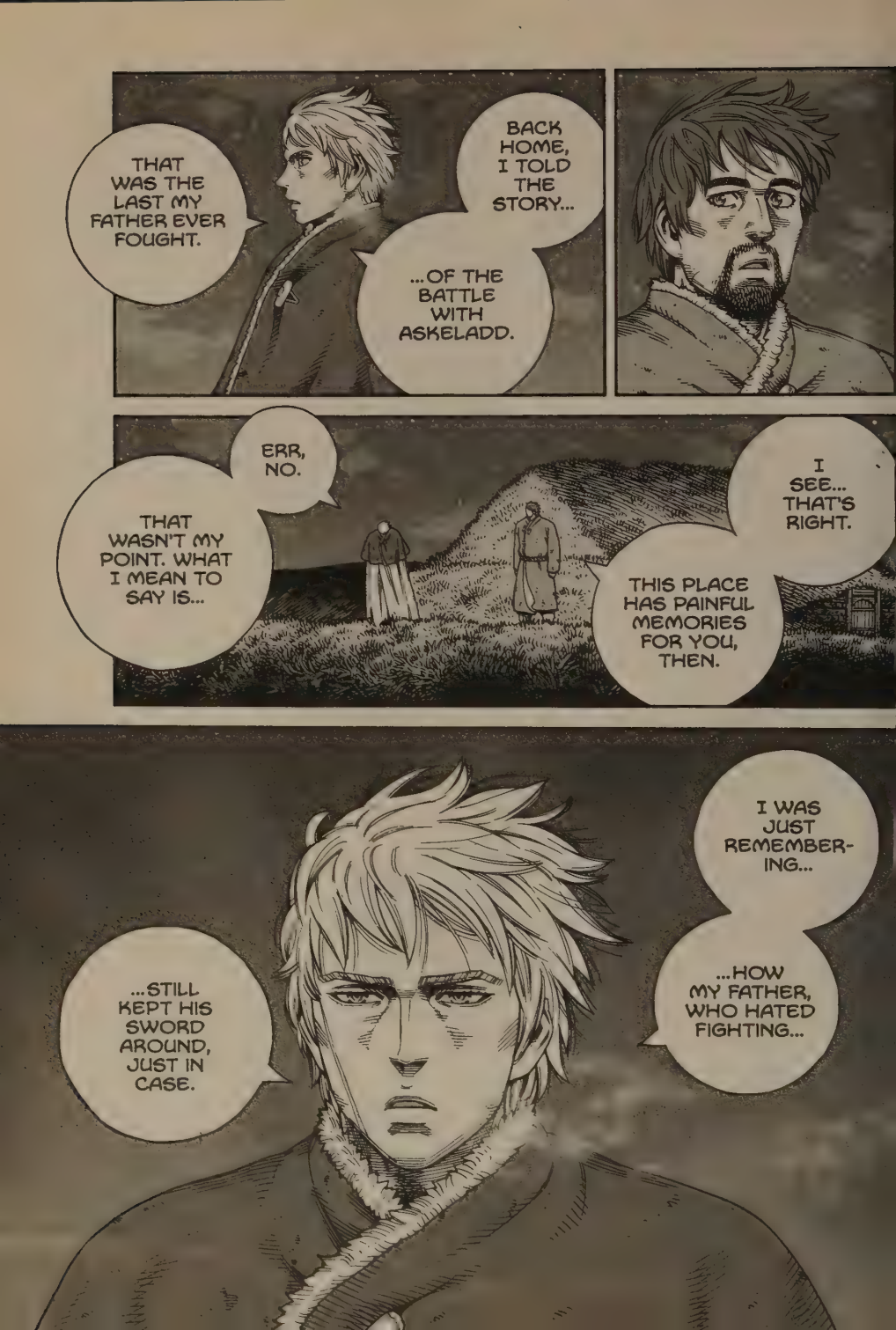

DSSHHHH...

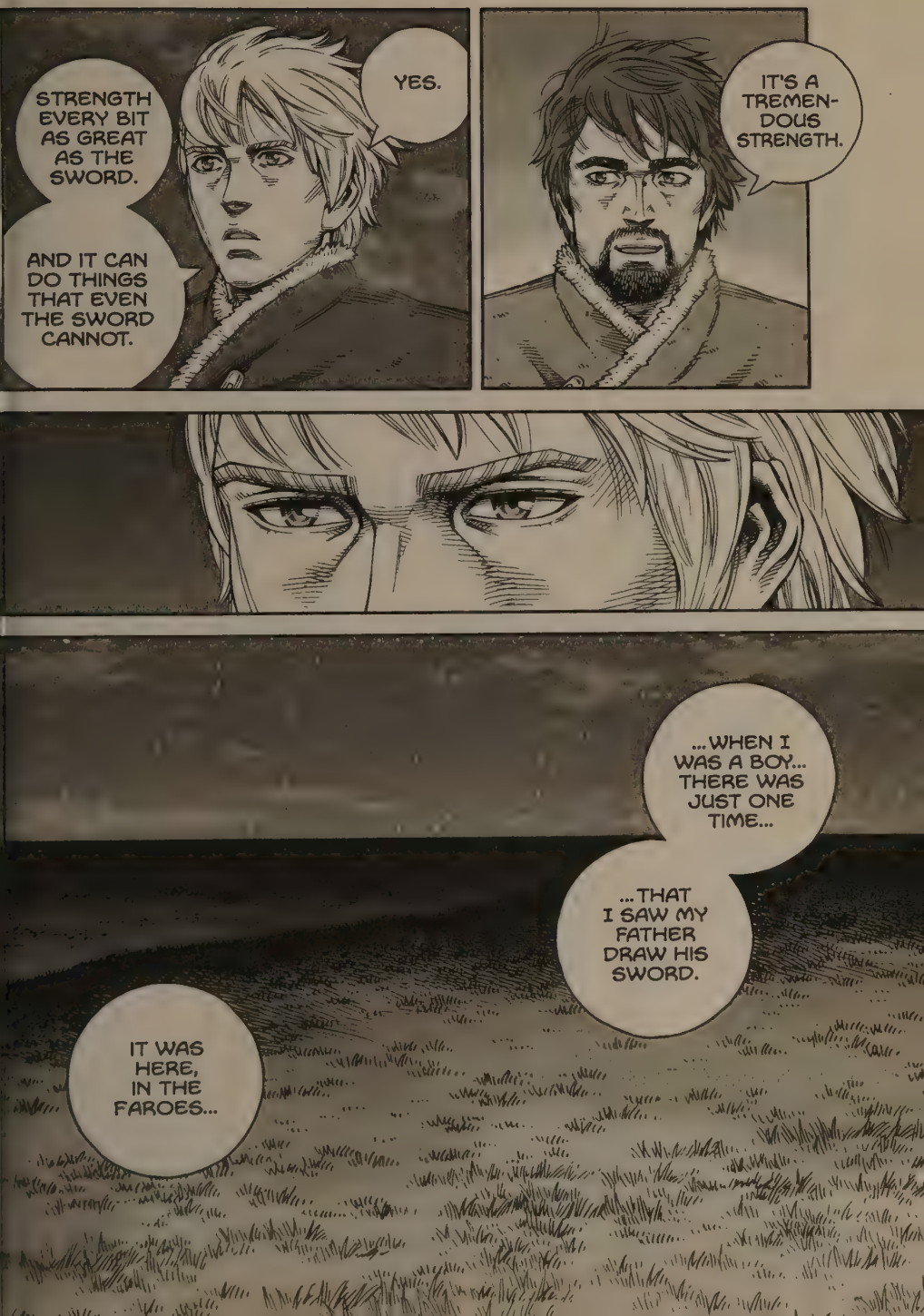
WHOOH

OOH.
COLD OUT HERE.

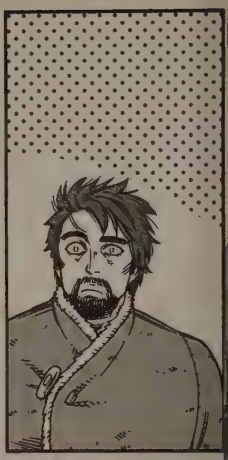
BTUMP

CREAK

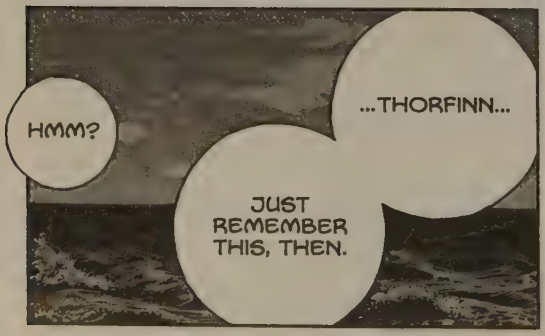

THAT WAS THE LAST MY FATHER EVER FOUGHT.
BACK HOME, I TOLD THE STORY...
...OF THE BATTLE WITH ASKELADD.
ERR, NO.
THAT WASN'T MY POINT. WHAT I MEAN TO SAY IS...
I SEE... THAT'S RIGHT.
THIS PLACE HAS PAINFUL MEMORIES FOR YOU, THEN.
I WAS JUST REMEMBER-ING...
...HOW MY FATHER, WHO HATED FIGHTING...
...STILL KEPT HIS SWORD AROUND, JUST IN CASE.

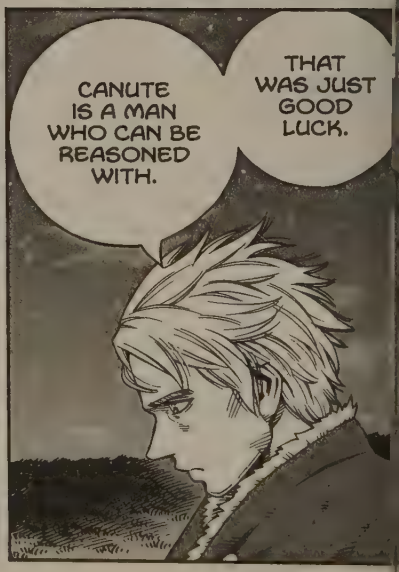

STRENGTH EVERY BIT AS GREAT AS THE SWORD.
YES.
AND IT CAN DO THINGS THAT EVEN THE SWORD CANNOT.
IT'S A TREMEN-DOUS STRENGTH.
...WHEN I WAS A BOY... THERE WAS JUST ONE TIME...
...THAT I SAW MY FATHER DRAW HIS SWORD.
IT WAS HERE, IN THE FAROES...

HA HA HA HA
YOU'RE REALLY SOMETHING, YOU KNOW THAT?
SO RATHER THAN WORRYING ABOUT YOUR OWN SURVIVAL...
...YOU'RE MORE CONCERNED WITH WHETHER YOU CAN AVOID HURTING ANYONE ELSE.



YOU'RE THE MAN WHO SPARRED WITH THE GREAT KING CANUTE.
IT'LL BE FINE.


HMM?
...THORFINN...
JUST REMEMBER THIS, THEN.

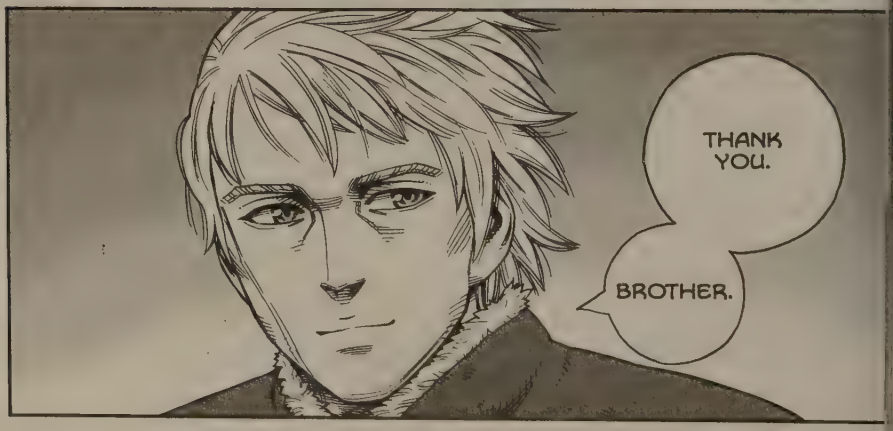

CANUTE IS A MAN WHO CAN BE REASONED WITH.
THAT WAS JUST GOOD LUCK.

THAT'S WHY HE LEFT THE MAINLAND AND CAME OUT HERE TO ICELAND, TO KEEP HIMSELF AWAY.
FATHER UNDERSTOOD THAT HE WAS... A MAN WHOSE PRESENCE BROUGHT BATTLE, I THINK.
BUT EVEN FATHER...
...WASN'T ABLE TO CAST ASIDE HIS SWORD UNTIL THE VERY END...
WILL I BE ABLE TO NAVIGATE THOSE WATERS WITHOUT DRAWING THE SWORD AGAIN...?
ON THE CONTINENT BEYOND THIS ISLAND... A GREAT VIOLENCE AWAITS US.

REMEMBER THAT I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL.
NEVER FORGET THAT, BROTHER.

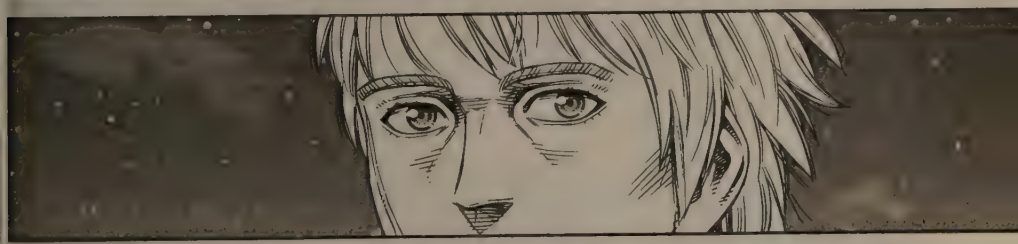
IT IS.
...HRRM...
MAYBE THAT'S NOT MUCH CONSOLATION AFTER ALL...

...


THANK YOU.
BROTHER.

REMEM-
BER...

...THAT
I KNOW
WHO YOU
ARE.

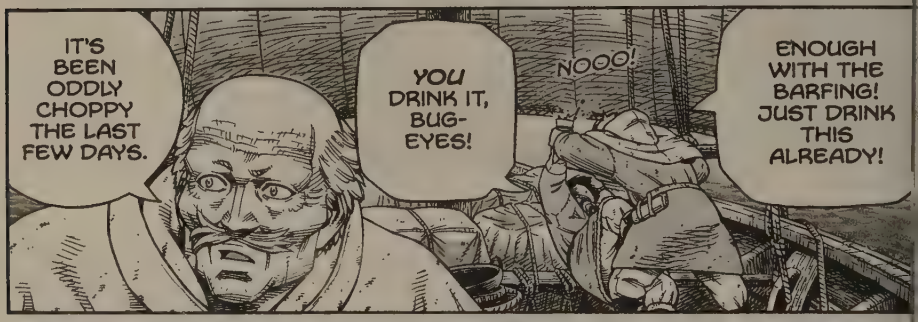


IF
YOU'RE IN
DANGER IN
THE DAYS
AHEAD...

...AND
YOUR
OPTIONS
DWINDLE...

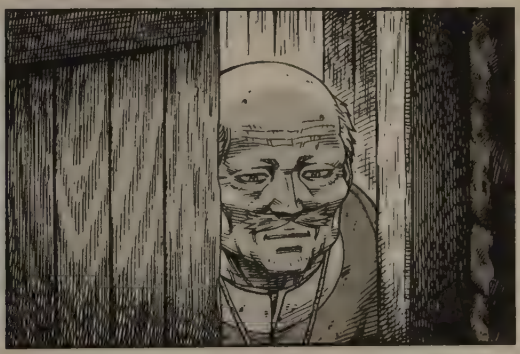
...AND
YOU'RE FORCED
TO TAKE THAT
"LAST RESORT"
YOU FEAR...

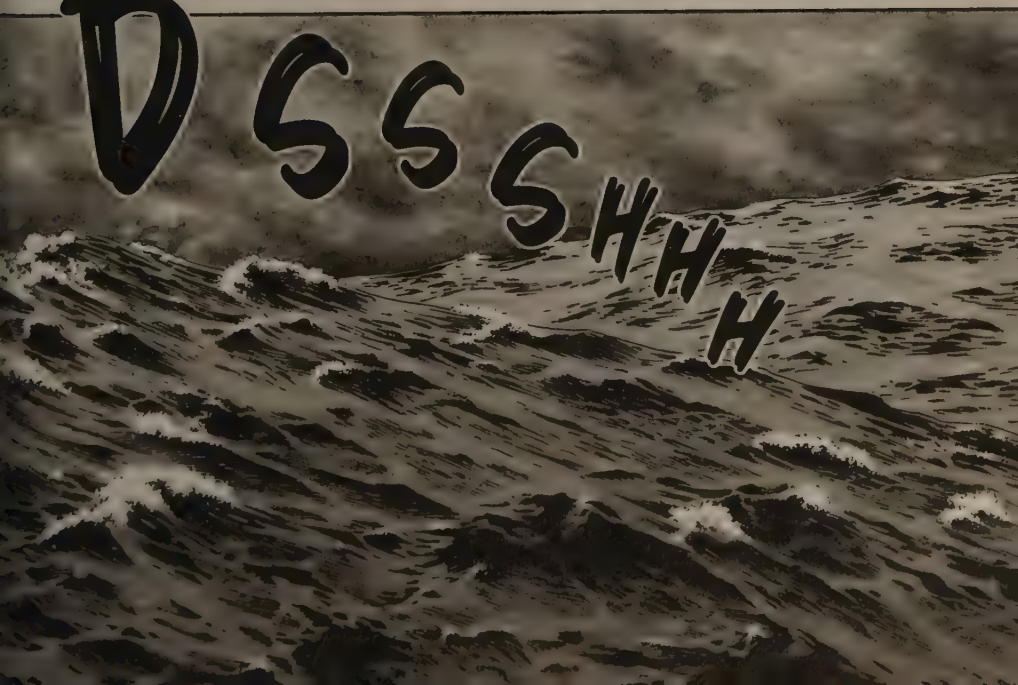
BLUGH! GAAH!
GURRRGGH...

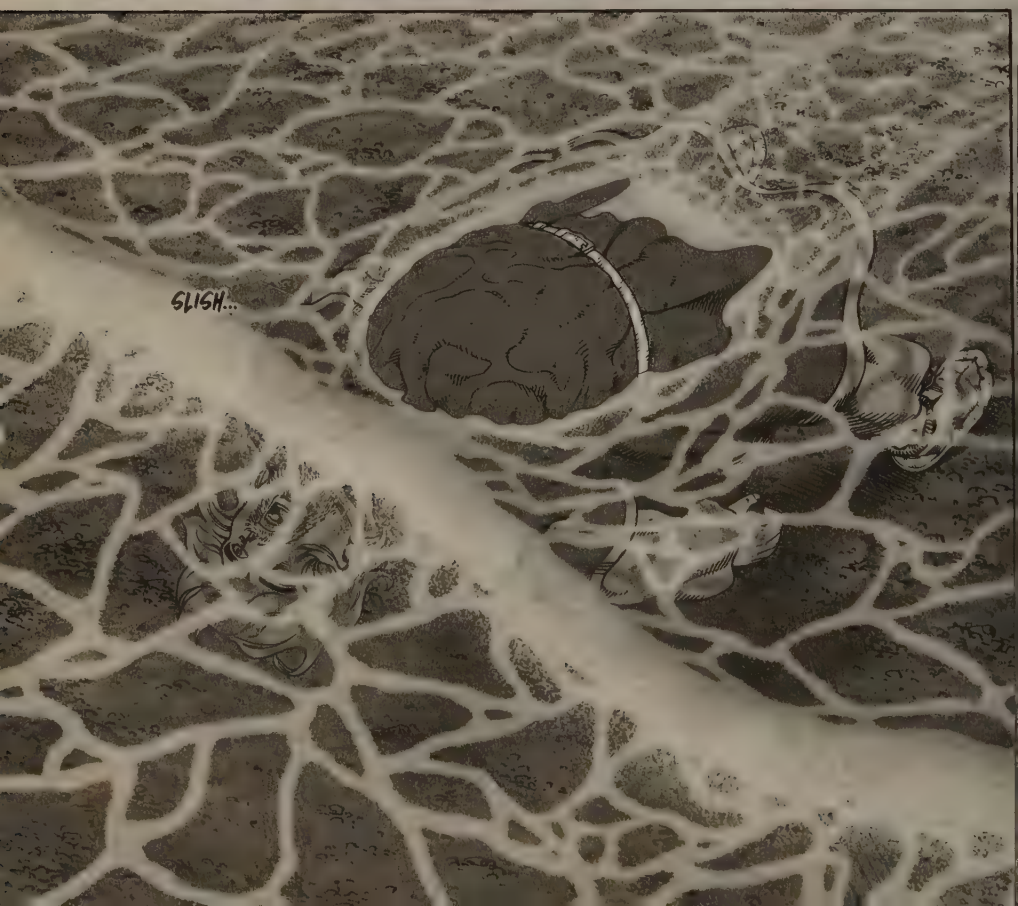

IT'S BEEN ODDLY CHOPPY THE LAST FEW DAYS.
YOU DRINK IT, BUG-EYES!
NOOO!
ENOUGH WITH THE BARFING! JUST DRINK THIS ALREADY!

PERHAPS SOME-THING'S AFOOT IN THE NEARBY SEAS.
ODIN'S IN A FOUL MOOD.

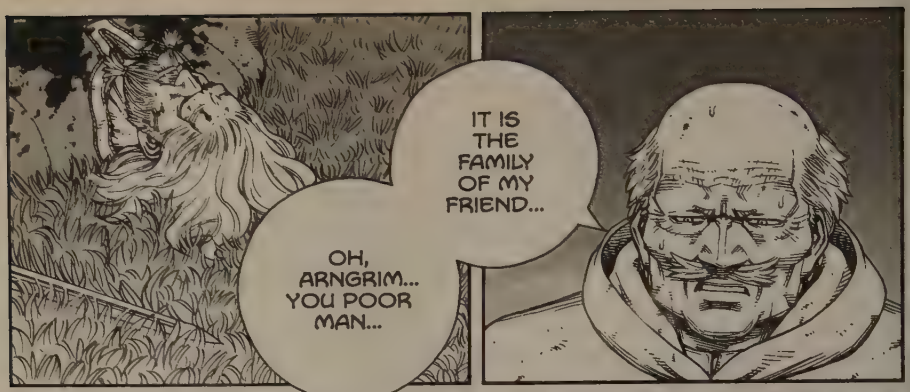
CREAK



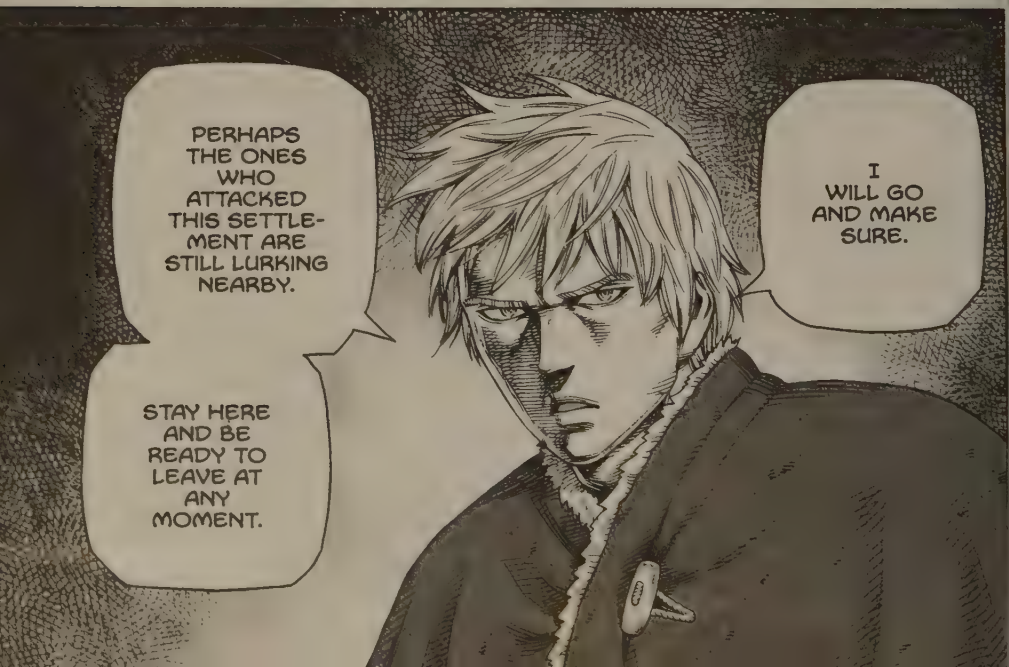

DSSSHHH

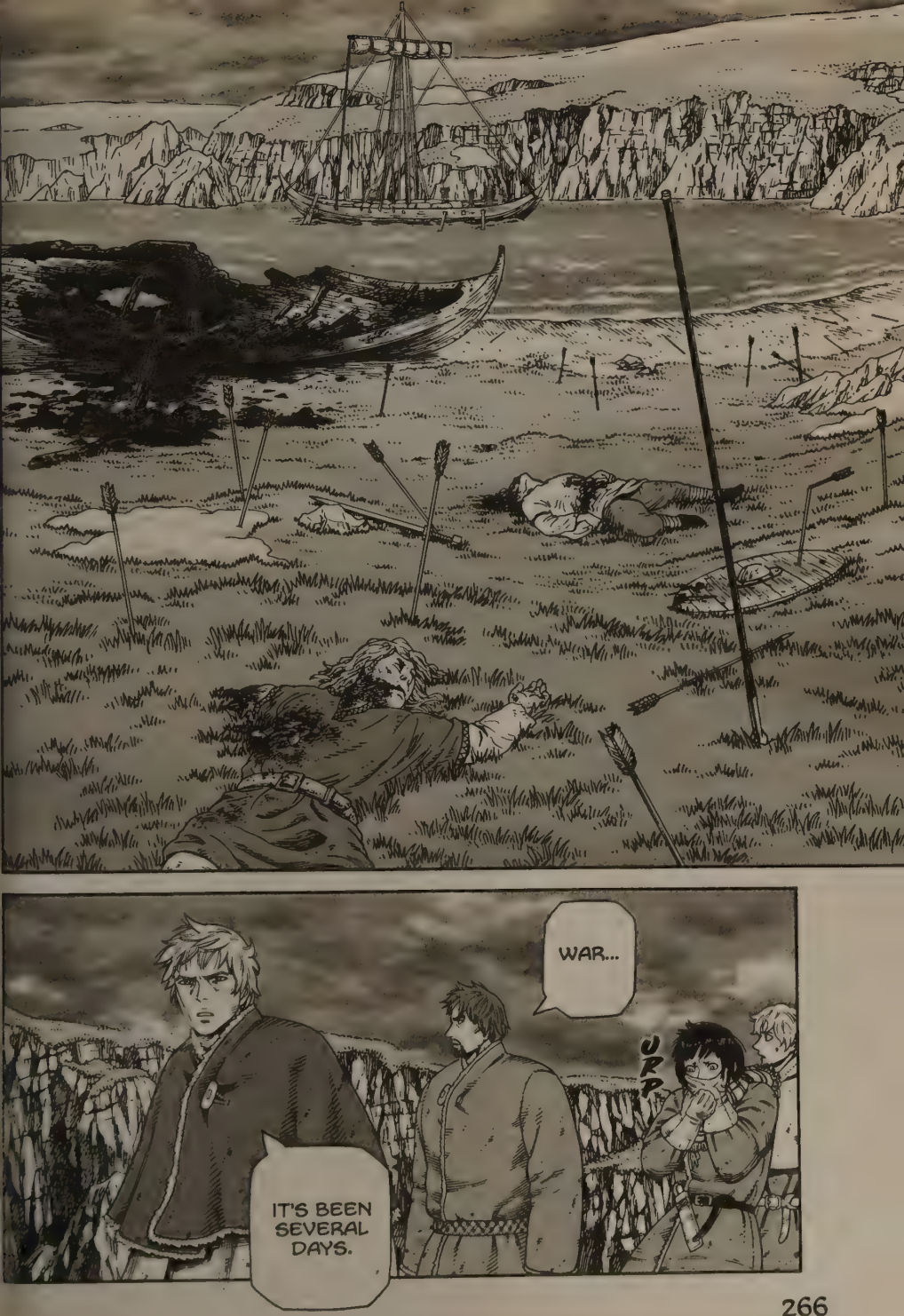

SLISH...

DSSSH
FOR INSTANCE...
...THE BLOOD OF WAR, SEEPING INTO THE WATERS.
HH
AFOOT? LIKE WHAT?
LAND AHOY, MISTER LEIF!
FSHHH
...
NORTH SEA
SHETLAND ISLANDS

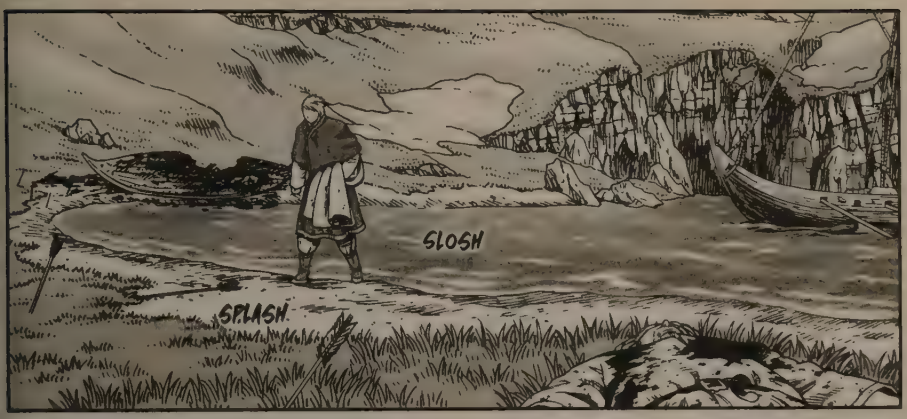

OH, ARNGRIM... YOU POOR MAN...
IT IS THE FAMILY OF MY FRIEND...

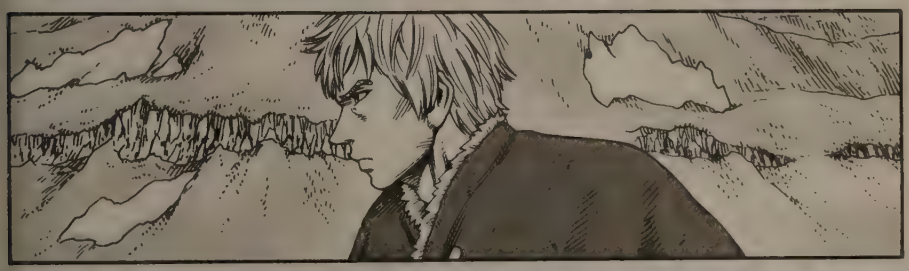
THERE MIGHT STILL BE SURVIVORS!
NO, MISTER LEIF! DON'T DIS-EMBARK!
GAKH
KOFF
KOFF
SPLASH


PERHAPS THE ONES WHO ATTACKED THIS SETTLE-MENT ARE STILL LURKING NEARBY.
STAY HERE AND BE READY TO LEAVE AT ANY MOMENT.
I WILL GO AND MAKE SURE.

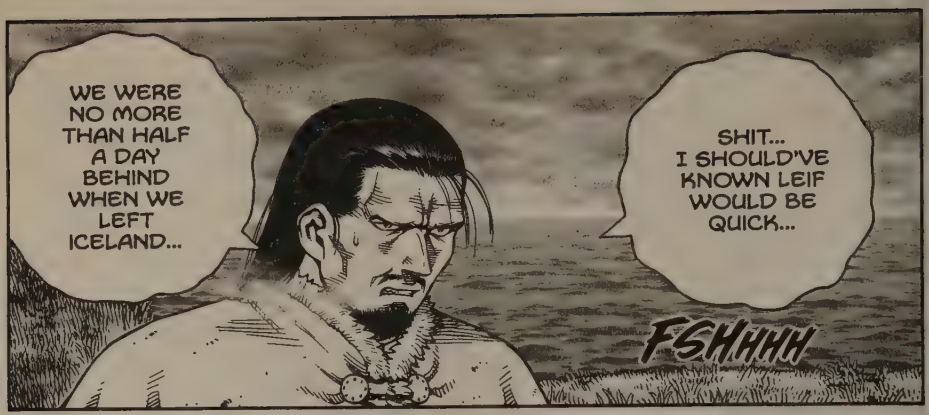

WAR...
URP
IT'S BEEN SEVERAL DAYS.

CHAPTER 111: FROM WARRIOR TO WARRIOR


SLOSH
SPLASH



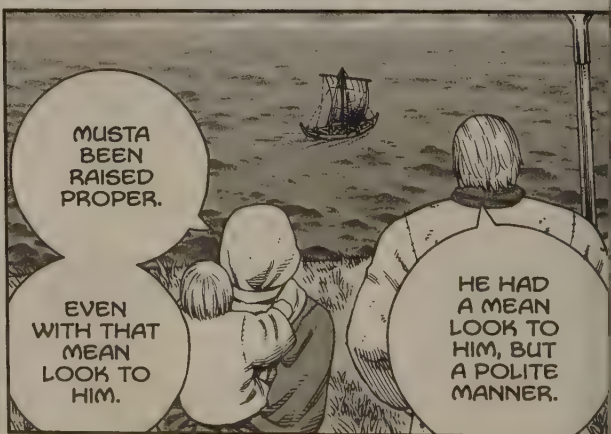
GRRRR...

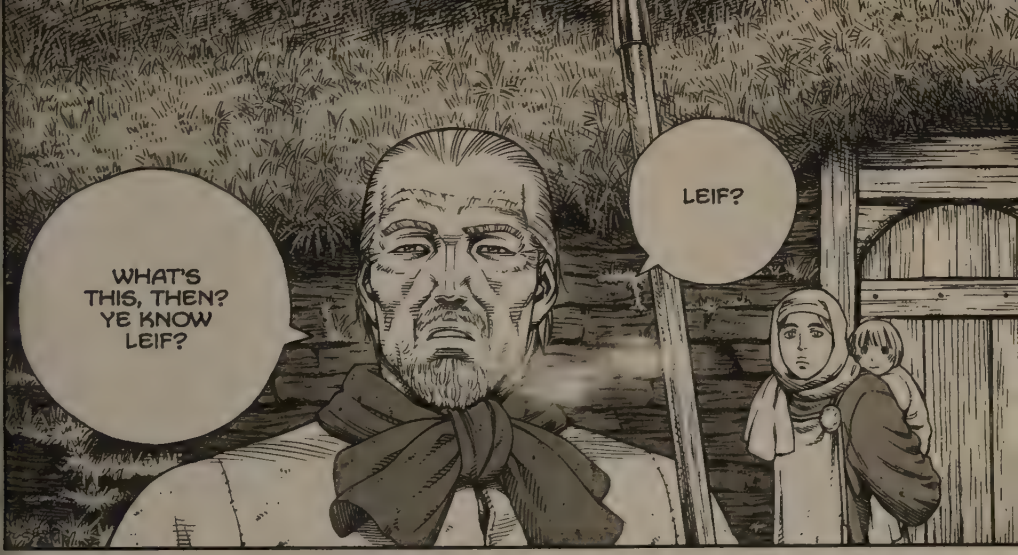

WE WERE NO MORE THAN HALF A DAY BEHIND WHEN WE LEFT ICELAND...
SHIT... I SHOULD'VE KNOWN LEIF WOULD BE QUICK...
FSHHHH

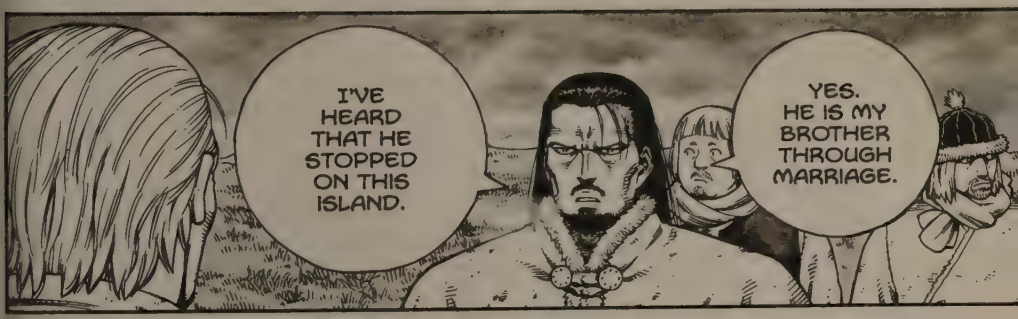
WE MUST BE OFF.
THANK YOU FOR THE SENTIMENT, BUT WE ARE IN A GREAT RUSH.

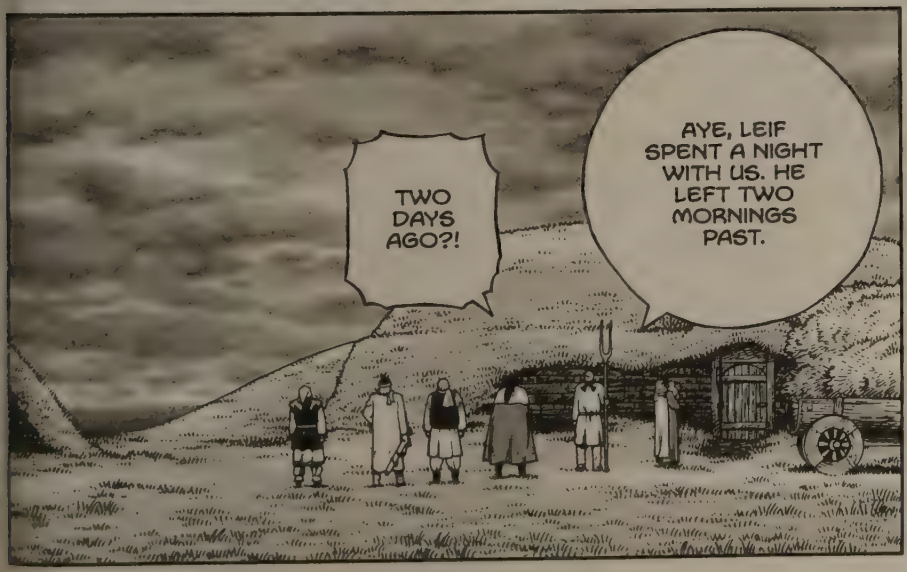
NOW, NOW, YE'RE WELCOME TO RELAX.
STAY AWHILE, AND TELL US YER STORY AND OF YER TRAVELS.
WE'RE LEAVING AT ONCE! THE SHETLANDS ARE NEXT!
AWWWW!
LET US TAKE A BREAK!
BOO! BOO!

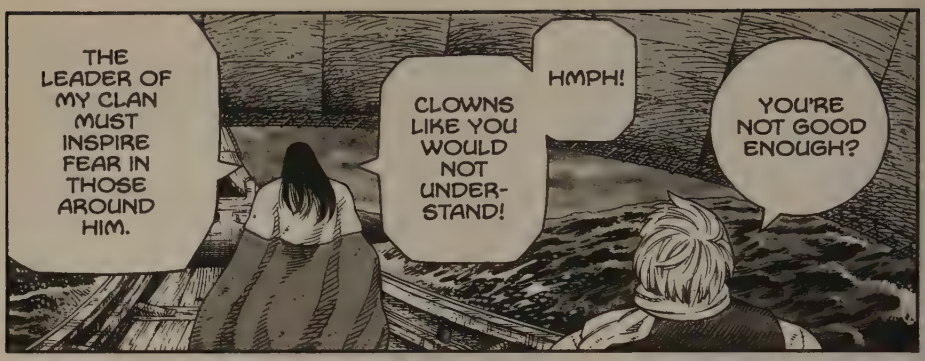
Y'KNOW, SIGGY...
I DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING TO CATCH UP TO THEM.

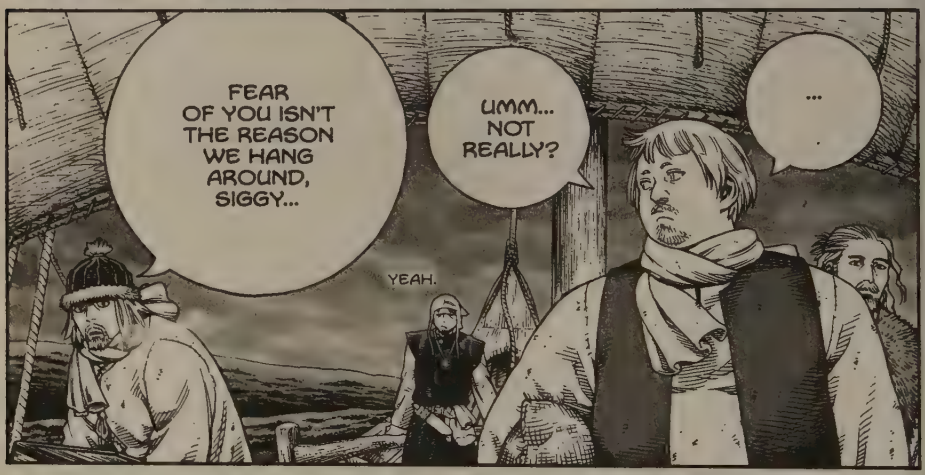

MUSTA BEEN RAISED PROPER.
EVEN WITH THAT MEAN LOOK TO HIM.
HE HAD A MEAN LOOK TO HIM, BUT A POLITE MANNER.

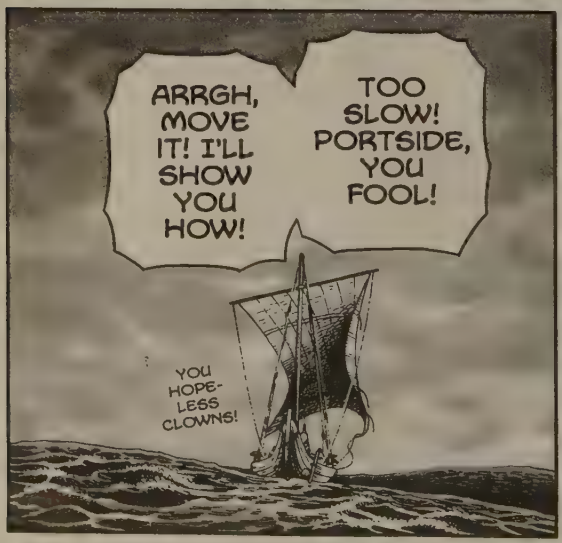

WHAT'S THIS, THEN? YE KNOW LEIF?
LEIF?

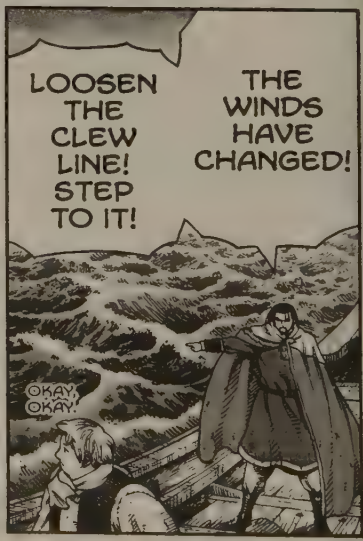

I'VE HEARD THAT HE STOPPED ON THIS ISLAND.
YES. HE IS MY BROTHER THROUGH MARRIAGE.


TWO DAYS AGO?!
AYE, LEIF SPENT A NIGHT WITH US. HE LEFT TWO MORNINGS PAST.


THE LEADER OF MY CLAN MUST INSPIRE FEAR IN THOSE AROUND HIM.
CLOWNS LIKE YOU WOULD NOT UNDER-STAND!
HMPH!
YOU'RE NOT GOOD ENOUGH?


FEAR OF YOU ISN'T THE REASON WE HANG AROUND, SIGGY...
UMM... NOT REALLY?
...
YEAH.

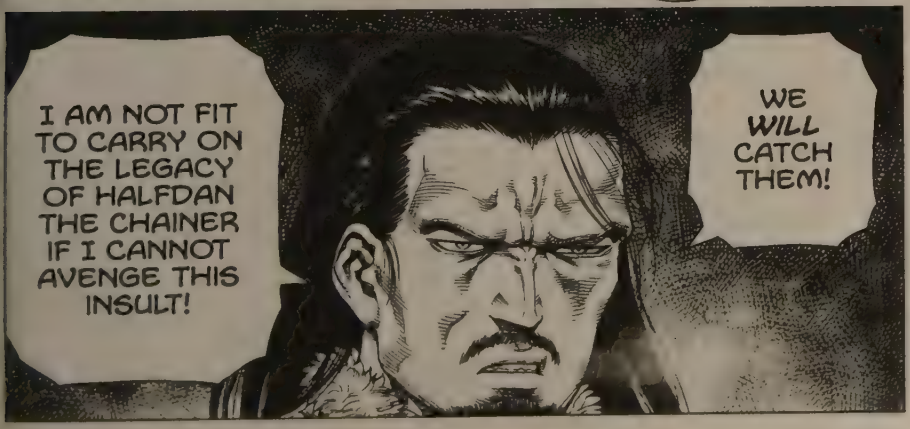

ARRGH, MOVE IT! I'LL SHOW YOU HOW!
TOO SLOW! PORTSIDE, YOU FOOL!
YOU HOPE-LESS CLOWNS!

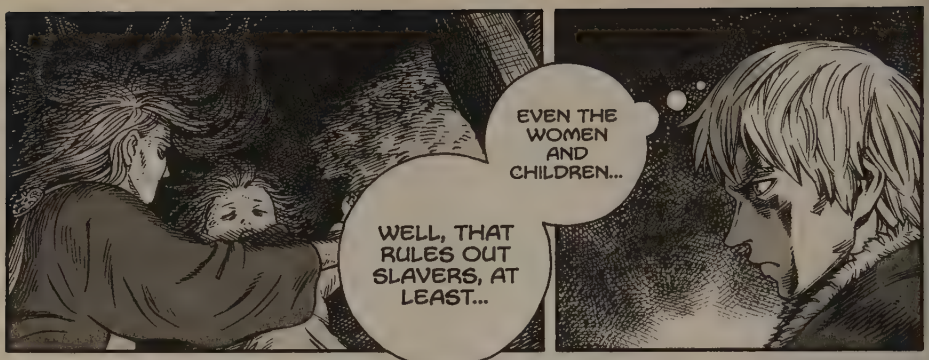

LOOSEN THE CLEW LINE! STEP TO IT!
THE WINDS HAVE CHANGED!
OKAY, OKAY!

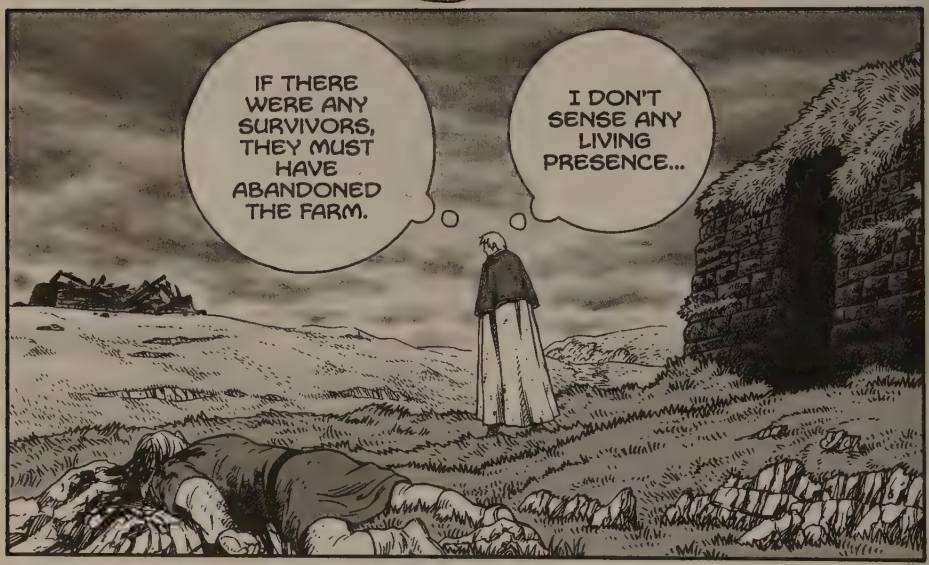
YEAH, BUT...

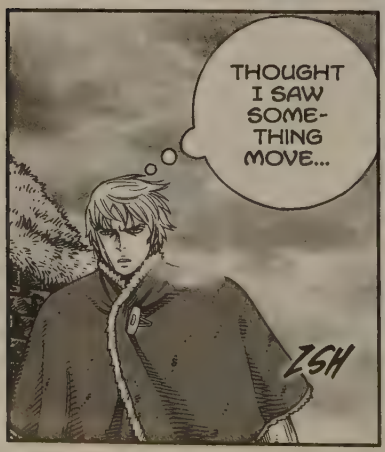
READ THE TIDES BETTER! CATCH THE WIND!

MAYBE OUR PROGRESS IS SLOWER BECAUSE YOU BUNGLING CLOWNS CAN'T DO YOUR JOBS RIGHT!!

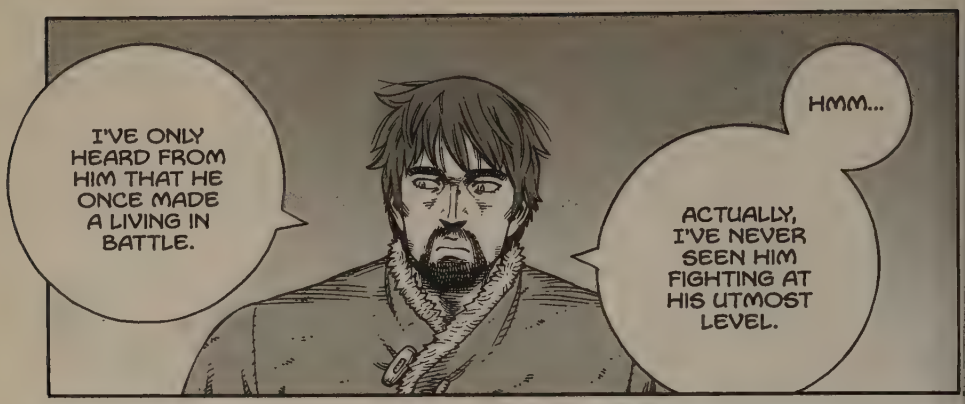



EVEN THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN...
WELL, THAT RULES OUT SLAVERS, AT LEAST...

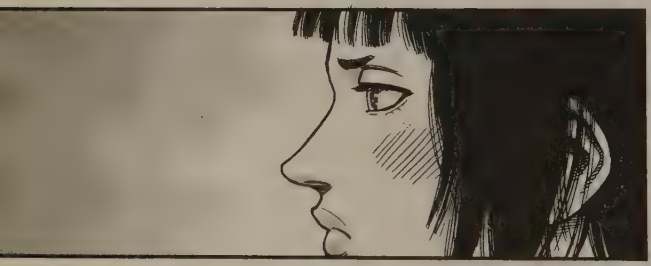

IF THERE WERE ANY SURVIVORS, THEY MUST HAVE ABANDONED THE FARM.
I DON'T SENSE ANY LIVING PRESENCE...

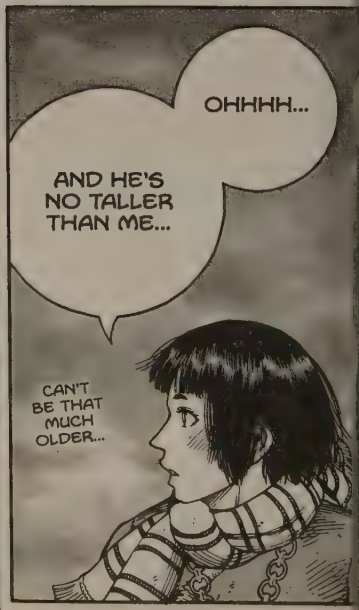

THOUGHT I SAW SOME-THING MOVE...
ZSH

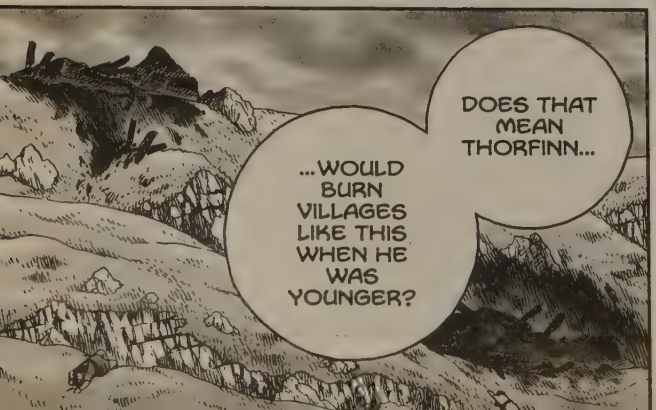
!


I'VE ONLY HEARD FROM HIM THAT HE ONCE MADE A LIVING IN BATTLE.
HMM...
ACTUALLY, I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM FIGHTING AT HIS UTMOST LEVEL.

I'M CERTAIN THAT HE LIVED THROUGH MANY BATTLES FOR ONE HIS AGE...
BUT HIS BOLDNESS AND BRAVERY ARE SECOND TO NONE.




OHHHH...
AND HE'S NO TALLER THAN ME...
CAN'T BE THAT MUCH OLDER...

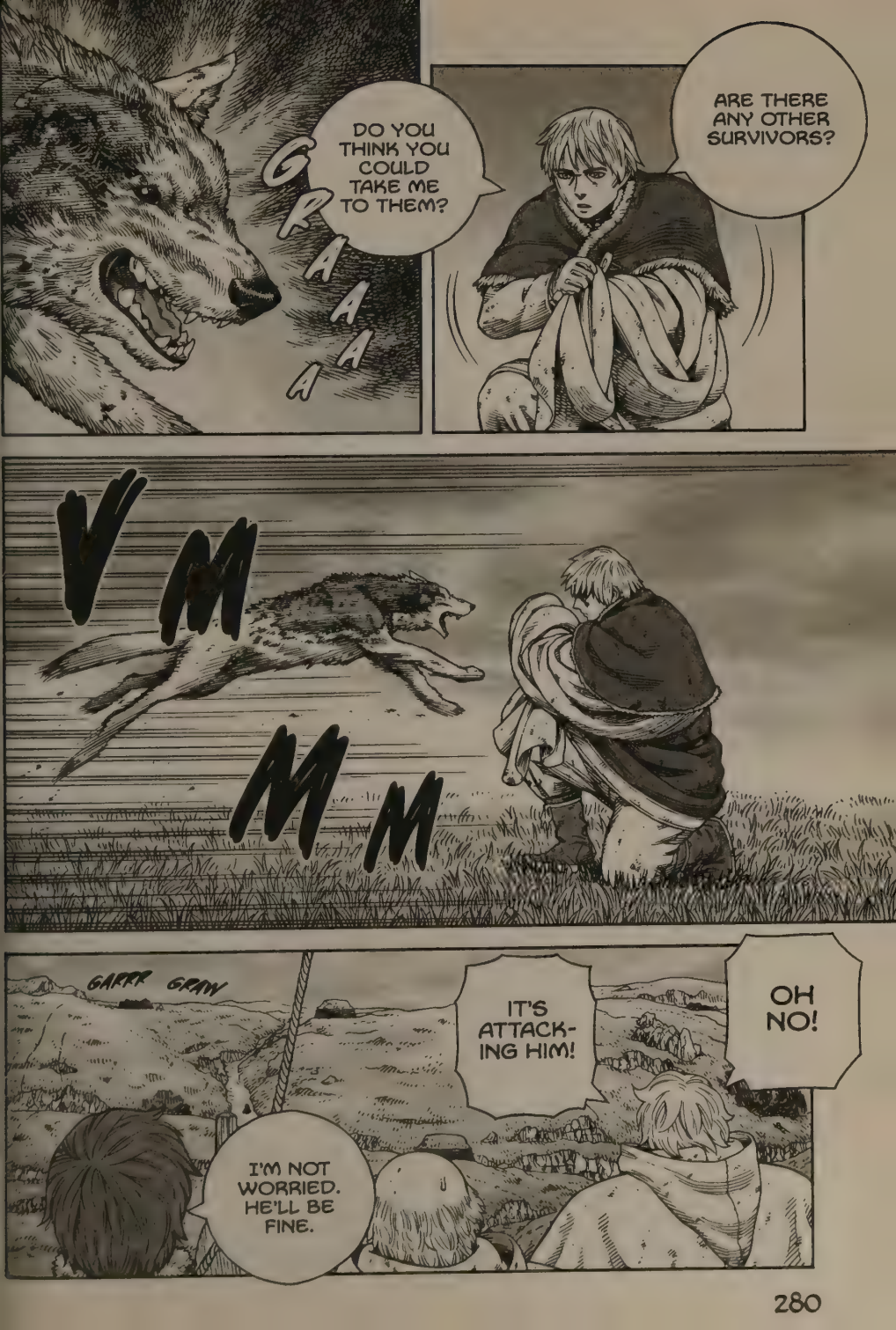

DOES THAT MEAN THORFINN...
...WOULD BURN VILLAGES LIKE THIS WHEN HE WAS YOUNGER?

WONDER IF HE FOUND SOME-THING...
THORFINN TOOK OFF RUNNING.
IF THERE'S ROUGH BUSINESS AFOOT, OUR PRESENCE WILL ONLY HOLD HIM DOWN.
LEAVE IT TO HIM.
...
IS THORFINN STRONG?
SHOULD WE GO TOO, EINAR?
...NO. LET'S WAIT FOR HIS SIGNAL.

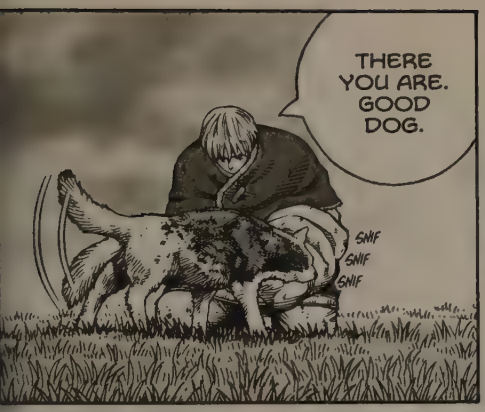
IT'S A DOG.
NEVER MIND...
GRRRRRRR
GRAW
IT'S ALL RIGHT, FRIEND. I MEAN YOU NO HARM.
THERE, THERE.
GRRR

?!
ACK
ER... I ONLY MEANT...
I SEE SOME-THING!
HEY!
I CAN'T SEE. IS IT A SURVIVOR?
THORFINN JUST...
I'LL DO THE LOOKING! I'M NOT "BUG-EYES" FOR NOTHING...
AH!

GRARRR
VRRRGG
THERE, THERE. IT MUST HAVE BEEN VERY SCARY.
IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW.
PLEASE UNDERSTAND ME.
WE ARE NOT ENEMIES.
PLEASE UNDERSTAND.


GRAAA
DO YOU THINK YOU COULD TAKE ME TO THEM?
ARE THERE ANY OTHER SURVIVORS?
VMMM
GARRR GRAW
I'M NOT WORRIED. HE'LL BE FINE.
IT'S ATTACKING HIM!
OH NO!

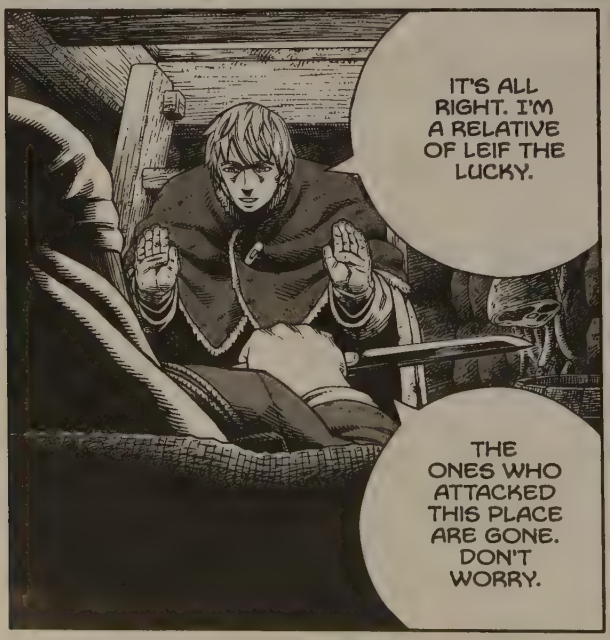
YOU READY?
ONE, TWO...
GRRRUK
AND THERE WE...
...GO!!
CRAKK
KSHUNK
TUNK
GRAGAK
KTHUNK
TUMP
SCRAK
SCRAK
IT'S A CELLAR.
FOR FOOD STORAGE?


THERE YOU ARE. GOOD DOG.
SNIF
SNIF
SNIF

?

WOOF!

EINAR! COME UP HERE!
IS SOMEONE UNDER THERE?!
WOOF!
WOOF!
WOOF!

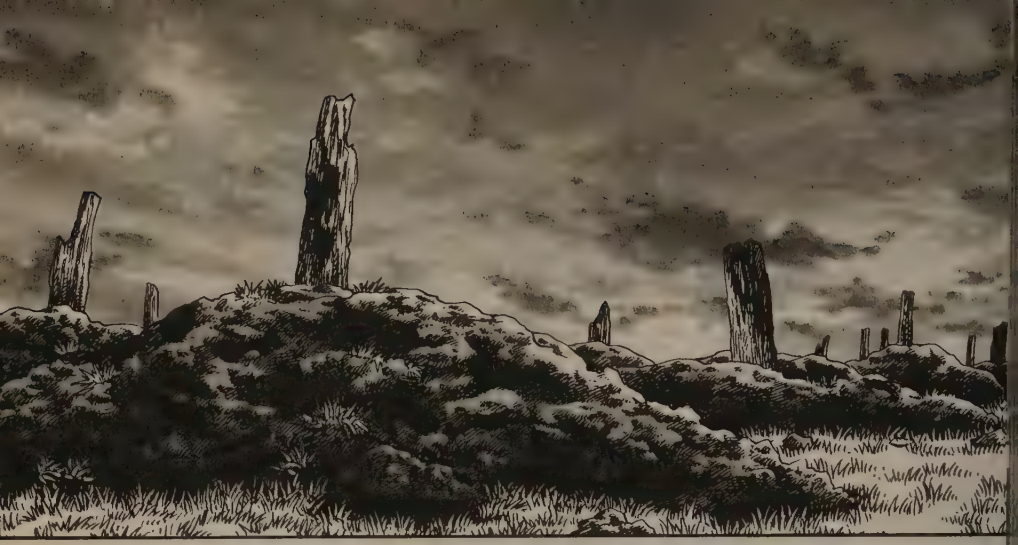

IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'M A RELATIVE OF LEIF THE LUCKY.
THE ONES WHO ATTACKED THIS PLACE ARE GONE. DON'T WORRY.

SURVI-VORS!
GO AND GET THE OTHERS, EINAR!

LET'S GET YOU OUT OF HERE.
CAN YOU STAND?
I'LL GET YOUR SHOULDER.
YOU CAN DO IT.
!
TWUNK

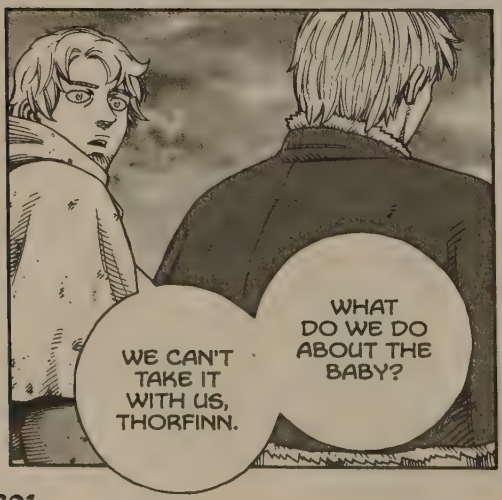
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
KARLI IS SAFE NOW.
THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

HUH? WHAT ...?
KARLI? IS THAT THE BABY'S NAME?
HURR
...KA...
HURR



MMH...
MMH...

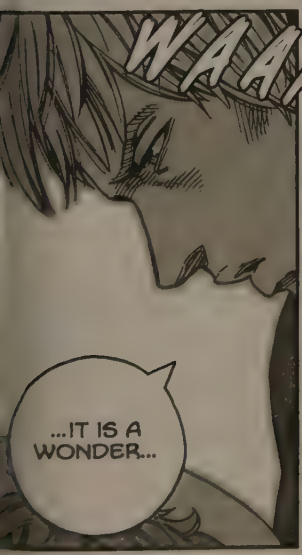
MMH...

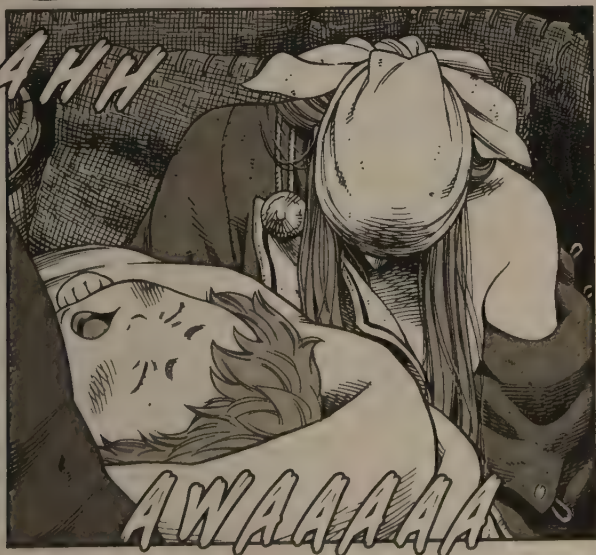

WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT THE BABY?
WE CAN'T TAKE IT WITH US, THORFINN.

YOU PROTECTED THEM, DIDN'T YOU?
WHAT A GOOD DOG.

WAAAAAH
WAAAAAH

THORFINN.
WAAAAAH
...SHE'S GONE.


WAAAHH
...IT IS A WONDER...


AWAAAAAA

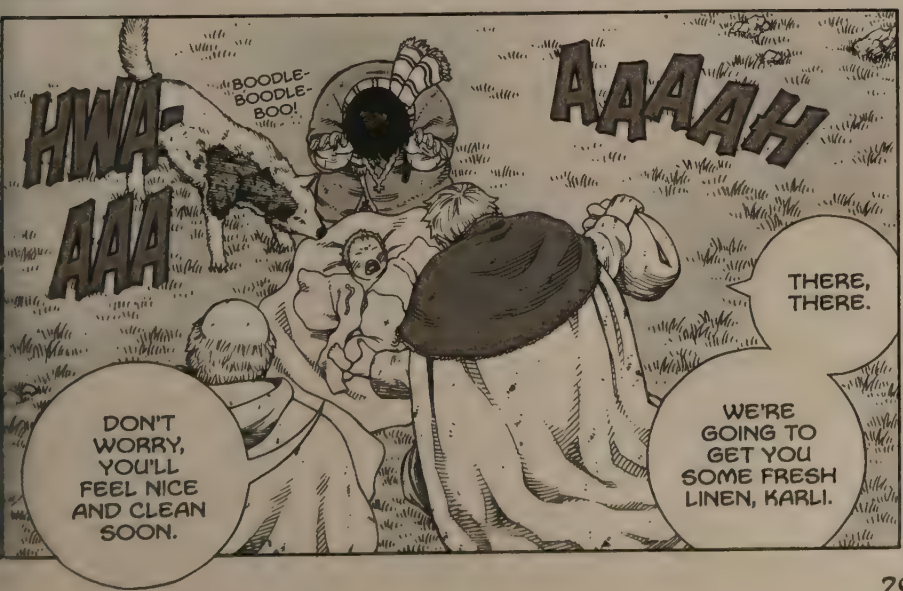
CHAPTER 112: OBLIGATORY VENGEANCE

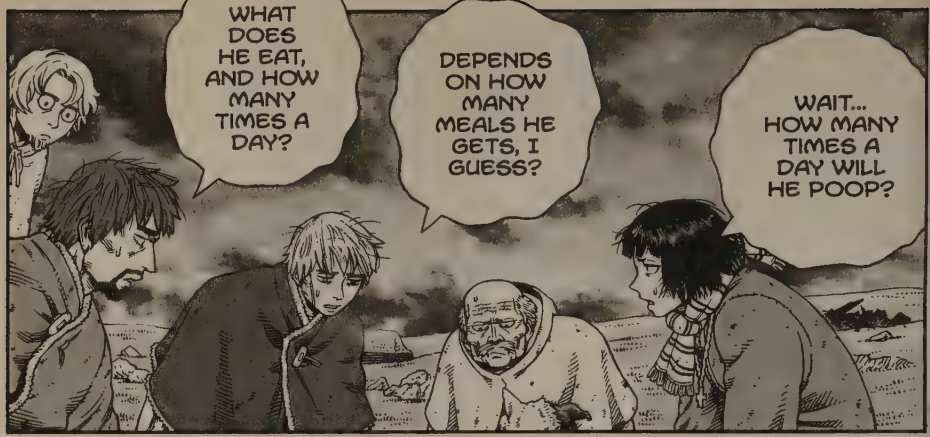
OTHERWISE THIS MOTHER'S SPIRIT CANNOT REST.
WE NEED TO FIND SOMEONE...
SOMEONE WHO WILL RAISE THIS BABY AS TENDERLY AS THEIR OWN...
BUT FOR THE MOMENT...
...THE MOST URGENT PRIORITY...
...
SMELL THAT? IT'S NUMBER TWO.
UH-OH, IT'S CRYING.
HUH? REALLY ?!
...IS A DIAPER CHANGE, I THINK.
WELL, WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING.
UMM, DOES ANYONE KNOW HOW TO DO THIS?!
WAAAAH
NNWAAAAH

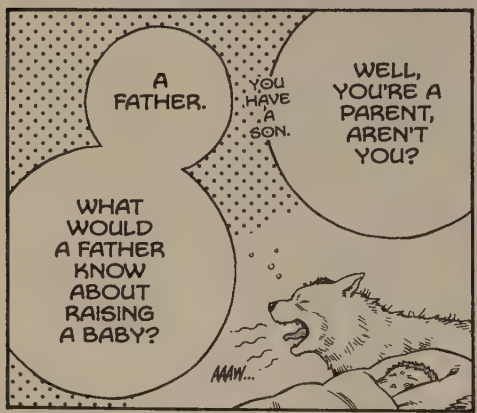
WHOA...
THANK YOU. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING LIKE A TOWEL?
ALL RIGHT, I'VE BROUGHT SOME WATER.
IS IT SUPPOSED TO BE THAT COLOR?
YES, HIS MOTHER WAS BREAST-FEEDING HIM WHEN I FOUND THEM.
MILK, OF COURSE. IT'S JUST A BABE.
WHAT DOES THE BABY EAT, ANYWAY?
I'D RATHER KEEP MY APPE-TITE.
NOPE.
BUG-EYES, COULD YOU WASH THIS FOR ME?
POOOO
THANKS. WE'LL NEED SOME CLOTHES, TOO.
I'LL LOOK FOR A SPARE DIAPER AROUND HERE.
WRING
ALL RIGHT, BUDDY. LET'S GET THAT BOTTOM CLEANED!
GOOD EYES, EINAR!
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'S SOME KIND OF FOOD IN THE POOP HERE.
DON'T WASH IT YET! WE NEED TO INVESTI-GATE.

AAA-AAAA

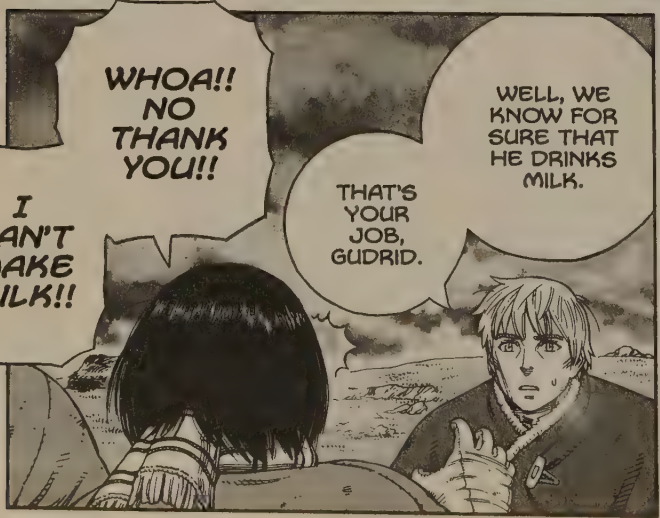
FNG-WAA

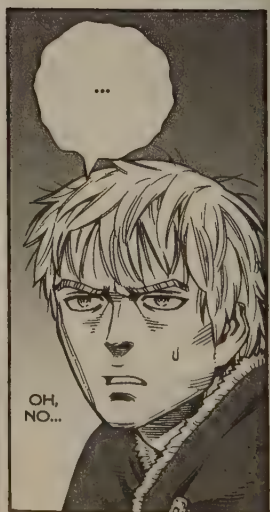



WHAT DOES HE EAT, AND HOW MANY TIMES A DAY?
DEPENDS ON HOW MANY MEALS HE GETS, I GUESS?
WAIT... HOW MANY TIMES A DAY WILL HE POOP?


WELL, YOU'RE A PARENT, AREN'T YOU?
YOU HAVE A SON.
A FATHER.
WHAT WOULD A FATHER KNOW ABOUT RAISING A BABY?
AAAW...

MISTER LEIF, HOW MANY TIMES DOES A BABY THIS SIZE NEED TO EAT?
WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME?


WELL, WE KNOW FOR SURE THAT HE DRINKS MILK.
THAT'S YOUR JOB, GUDRID.
WHOA!! NO THANK YOU!!
I CAN'T MAKE MILK!!


...
OH, NO...

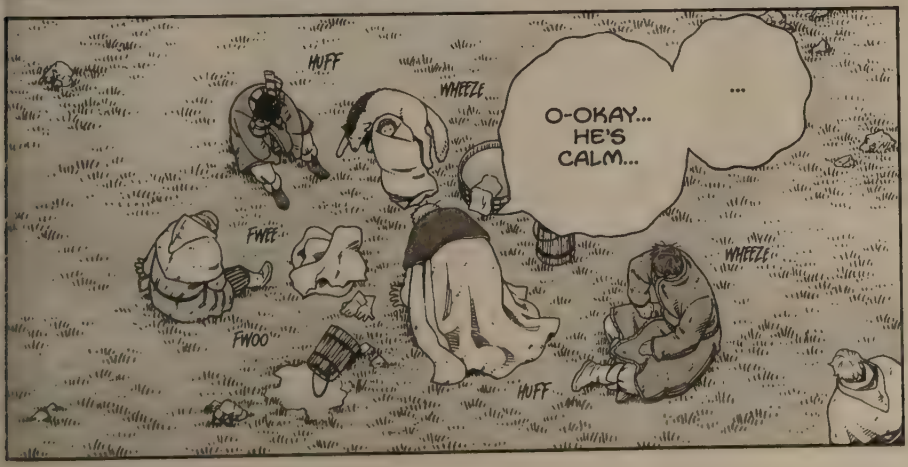
HNNGYAA-AAAA-AA

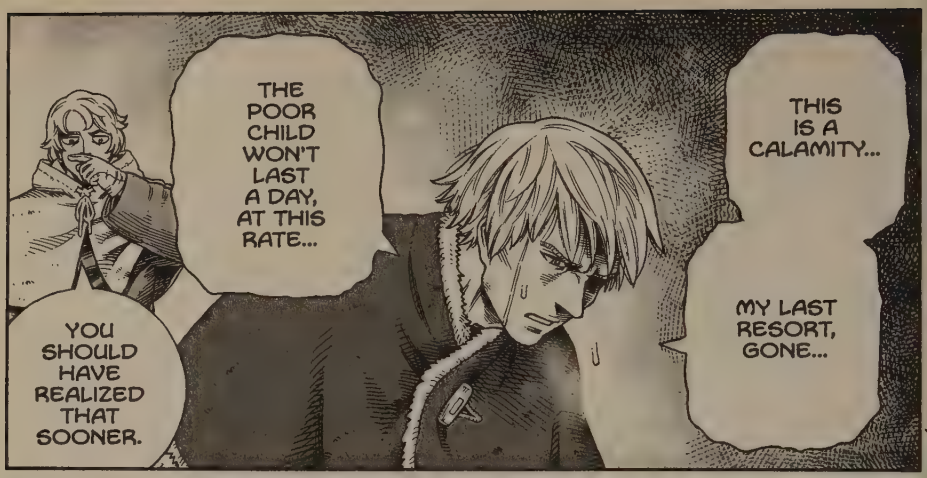
WHAT?! I CAN'T HEAR YOU!!

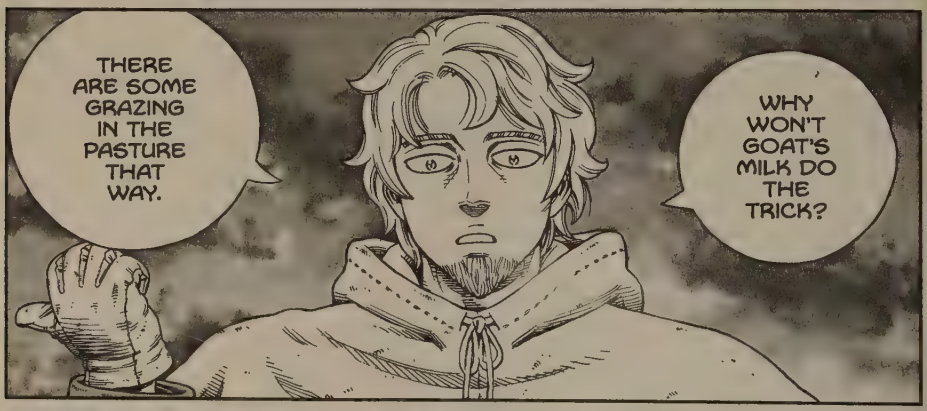
MAYBE IT WAS TOO COLD?

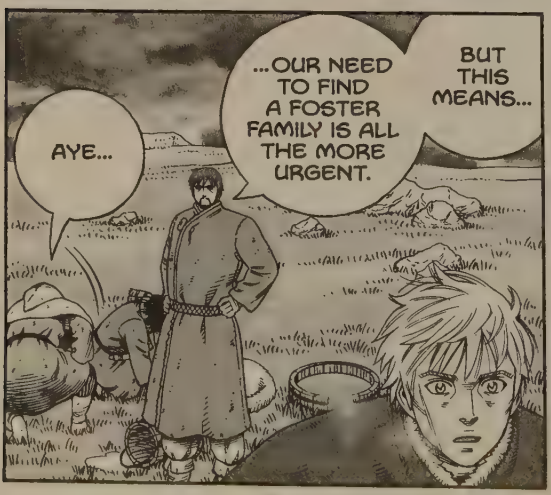
I DON'T KNOW! I JUST WIPED HIM WITH THE WET TOWEL...

WH-WHAT'S WRONG ?!



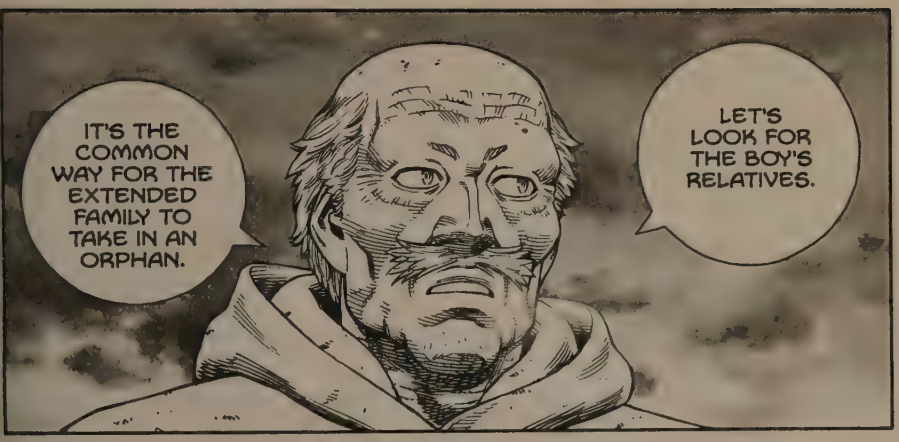

THE POOR CHILD WON'T LAST A DAY, AT THIS RATE...
THIS IS A CALAMITY...
YOU SHOULD HAVE REALIZED THAT SOONER.
MY LAST RESORT, GONE...


THERE ARE SOME GRAZING IN THE PASTURE THAT WAY.
WHY WON'T GOAT'S MILK DO THE TRICK?

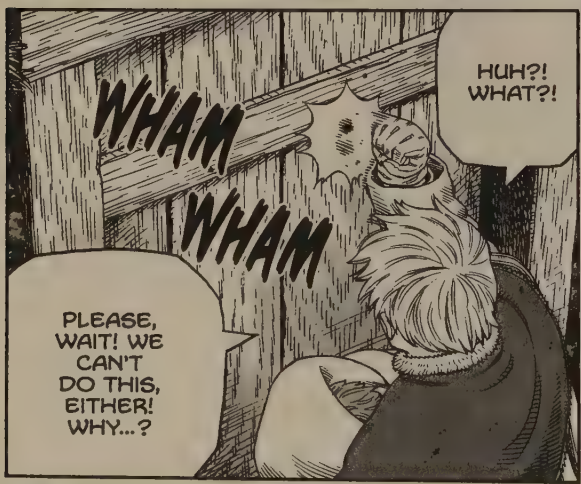

AYE...
...OUR NEED TO FIND A FOSTER FAMILY IS ALL THE MORE URGENT.
BUT THIS MEANS...

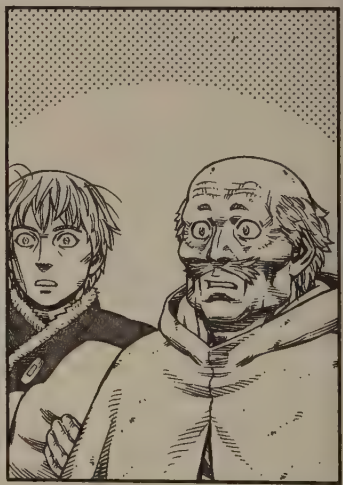
OVER THERE.
YES, PERFECT! SHOW ME WHERE TO FIND THEM.

YES, I DO!
PLEASE, WE HAVE NO OTHER OPTION.
BUT... WOW, YOU REALLY DON'T GET IT, DO YOU?!
YOU'VE GOT TEATS.
SQUEEZE HIM SOME MILK.
IF YOU DON'T HAVE A BABY...
...YOU DON'T MAKE MILK!
AND I'VE NEVER GIVEN BIRTH!
WELL, I GUESS YOU'VE LEARNED SOMETHING TODAY.
CON-GRATS.
AND...
ALL WOMEN ARE LIKE THAT?


IT'S THE COMMON WAY FOR THE EXTENDED FAMILY TO TAKE IN AN ORPHAN.
LET'S LOOK FOR THE BOY'S RELATIVES.

WE WON'T BE TAKING NO BABIES!
BEGONE FROM HERE!


WHAM
WHAM
HUH?! WHAT?!
PLEASE, WAIT! WE CAN'T DO THIS, EITHER! WHY...?



WHAM
IF WE TAKE THAT CHILD IN, OUR FAMILY WILL BE IN DANGER NEXT!
WHY?! I'LL TELL YOU WHY!
WHAM
WHAM

THAT LITTLE BABE IS FROM ARNGRIM'S FAMILY?!

...

HIS NAME'S KARLI.

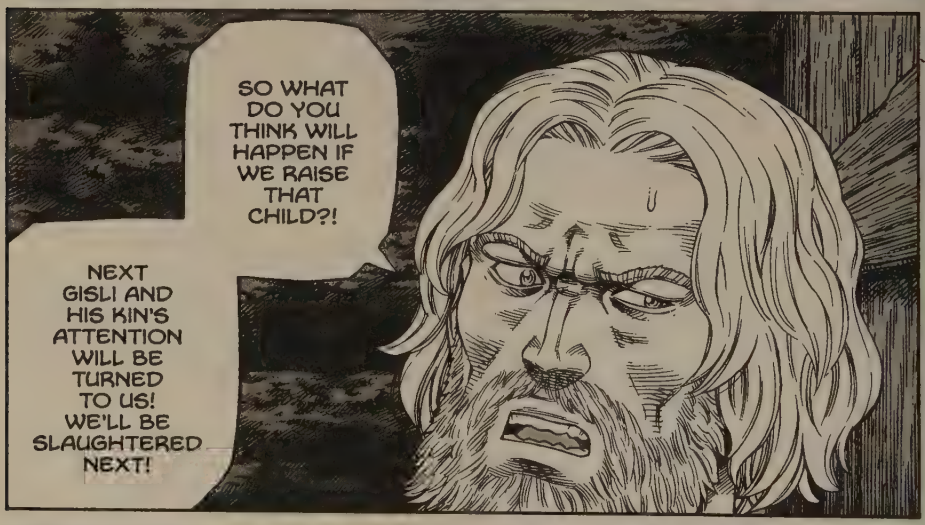
YES. HE'S THE ONLY SURVIVOR.

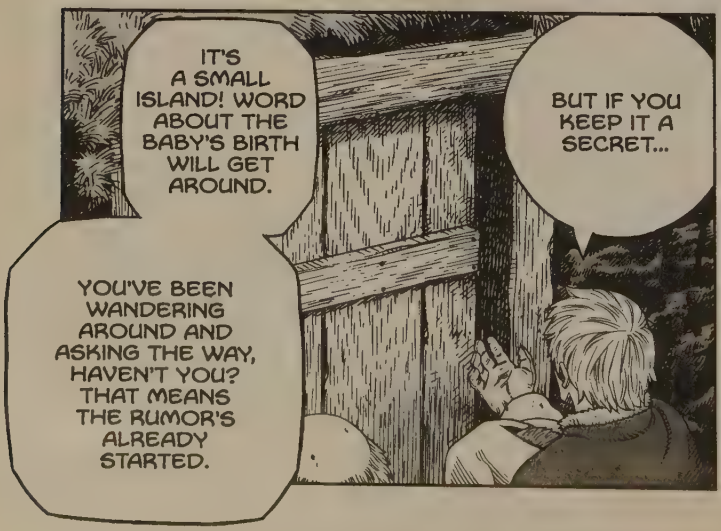
SLAM

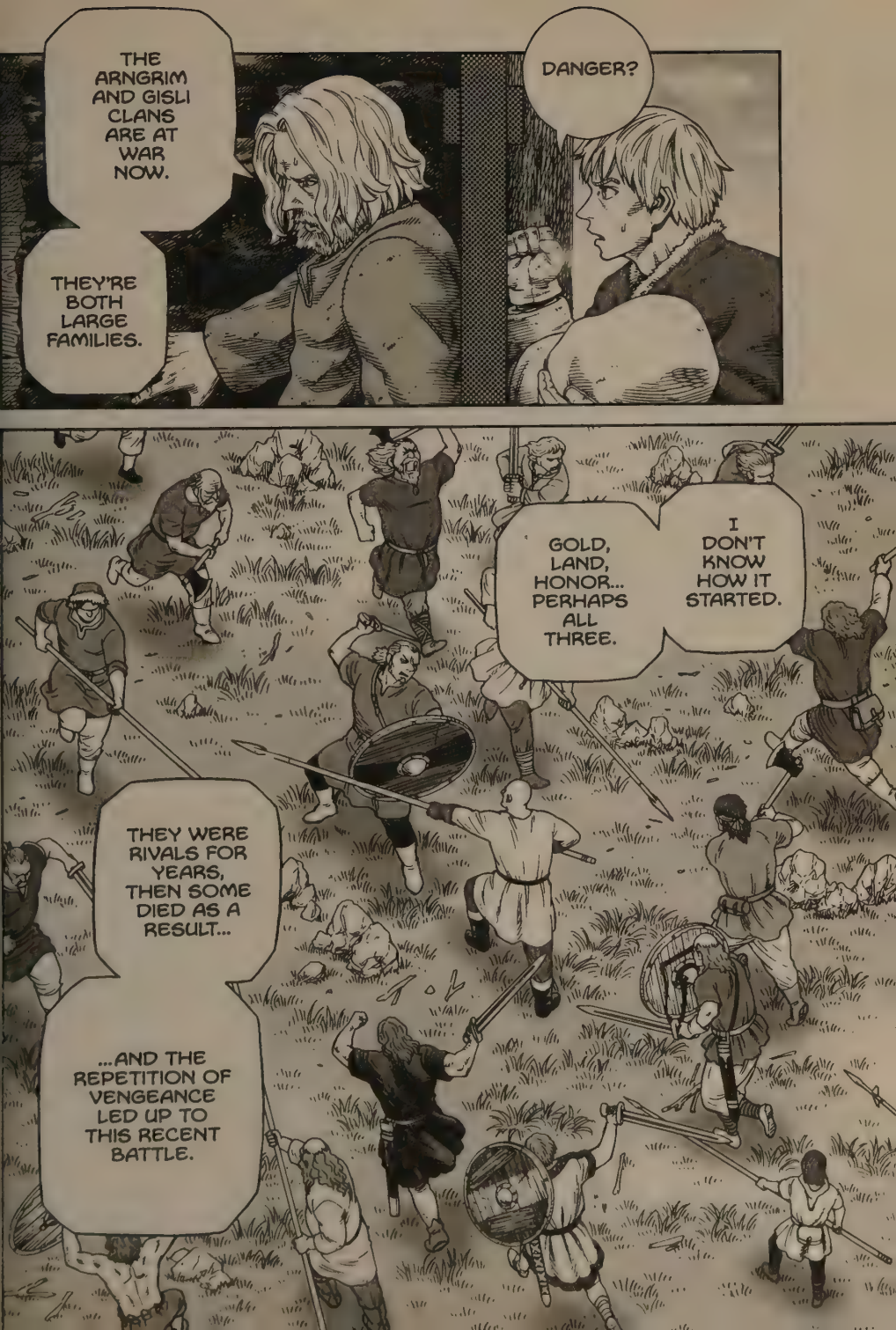
WILL YOU TAKE–

WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING FAR AND WIDE. YOU'RE ARNGRIM'S COUSIN.

GISLI IS A FEARSOME MAN. HE DECIDED TO END THE FEUD BY KILLING THEM ALL FOR GOOD.
ARNGRIM'S CLAN LOST THE FIGHT.


SO WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN IF WE RAISE THAT CHILD?!
NEXT GISLI AND HIS KIN'S ATTENTION WILL BE TURNED TO US! WE'LL BE SLAUGHTERED NEXT!

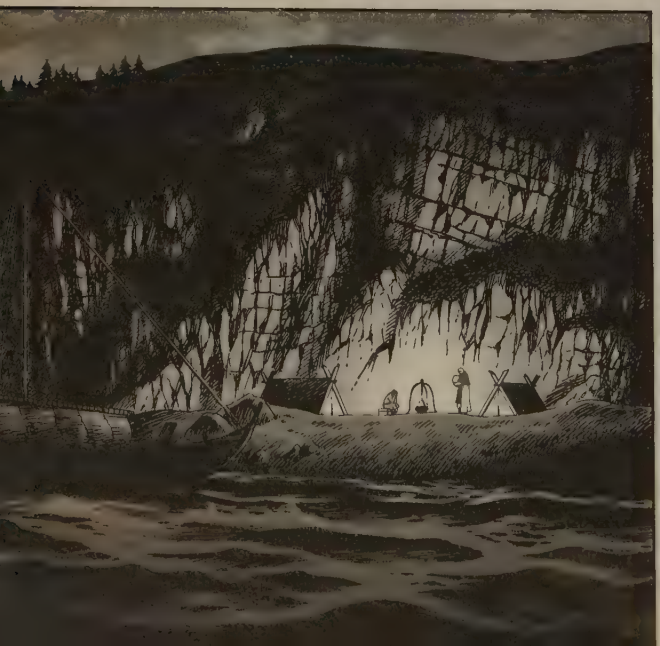

IT'S A SMALL ISLAND! WORD ABOUT THE BABY'S BIRTH WILL GET AROUND.
BUT IF YOU KEEP IT A SECRET...
YOU'VE BEEN WANDERING AROUND AND ASKING THE WAY, HAVEN'T YOU? THAT MEANS THE RUMOR'S ALREADY STARTED.

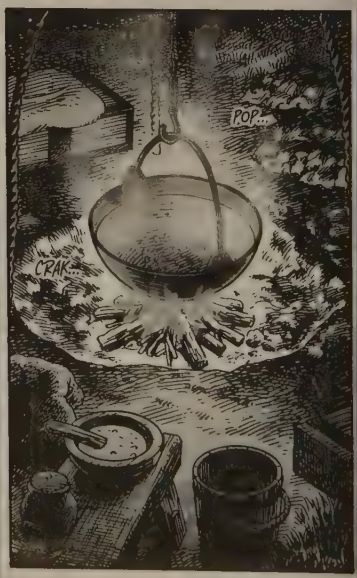

THE ARNGRIM AND GISLI CLANS ARE AT WAR NOW.
THEY'RE BOTH LARGE FAMILIES.
DANGER?
GOLD, LAND, HONOR... PERHAPS ALL THREE.
I DON'T KNOW HOW IT STARTED.
THEY WERE RIVALS FOR YEARS, THEN SOME DIED AS A RESULT...
...AND THE REPETITION OF VENGEANCE LED UP TO THIS RECENT BATTLE.

LET'S LOOK FOR A FOSTER FAMILY ELSE-WHERE.

SOMEWHERE UNRELATED TO KARLI'S BLOOD AND THIS FEUD...

SOME-WHERE THAT'S NOT HERE.





NOW BEGONE!
I'VE NOTHING MORE TO SAY TO YOU!
YOU'RE THE BOY'S FAMILY!! HOW CAN YOU BE SO COLD?!
IT'S NOT FAIR TO FORCE US TO RAISE HIM...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, GUDRI.
MONSTER!
HEART-LESS TROLL!!
NO... LET'S NOT.
IF WHAT HE SAID IS TRUE, THE BOY WILL DIE.
WHY NOT JUST LEAVE HIM ON THE DOOR-STEP?
BUT, I MEAN-!!
THEY'LL PROBABLY TAKE HIM IN ANYWAY.

HNG-WAAAA
CRADLE ME, YOU FOOL!!

ALL RIGHT, I'LL GIVE IT A TRY.

DARN! THE BEDTIME PLAN FAILED!

GOAT'S MILK PUDDING ISN'T A TYPICAL FOOD...

YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT.

I THINK HE MUST BE HUNGRY...

FWAA FWAA

GWAAAA
GWAH WAAAH

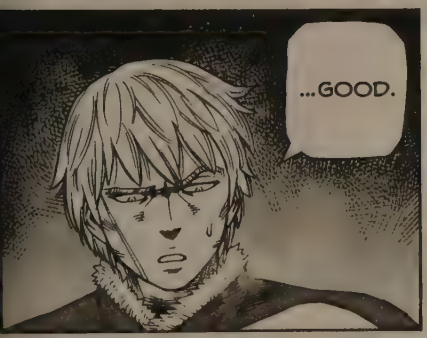
IT WAS SO SHAME-FUL.

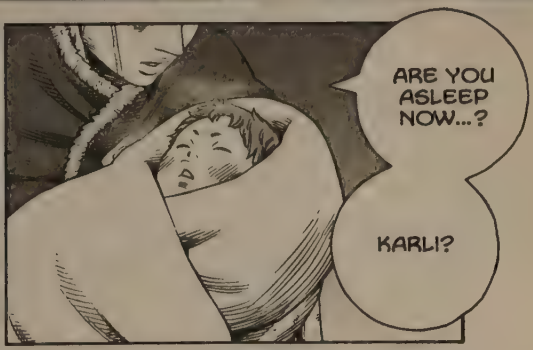
TREMBLING IN FRIGHT OVER VENGEANCE. HE'S JUST A LITTLE BABY!

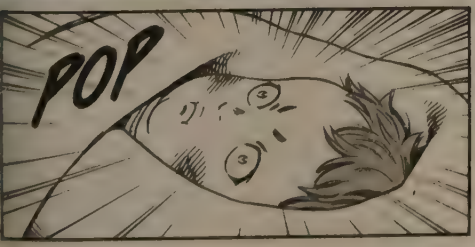
...MY WRISTS HURT...

I WAS HOLDING HIM SO LONG!

IF ONLY WE'D GOTTEN SOME MILK FROM THAT HOUSE WE VISITED EARLIER...

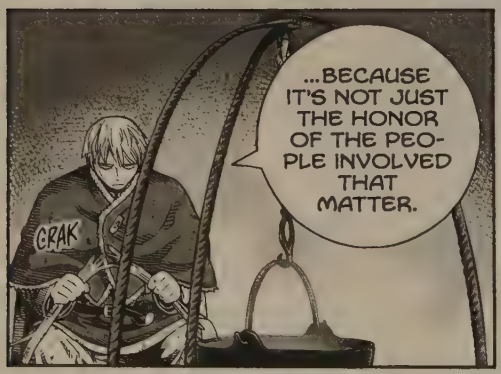

...GOOD.

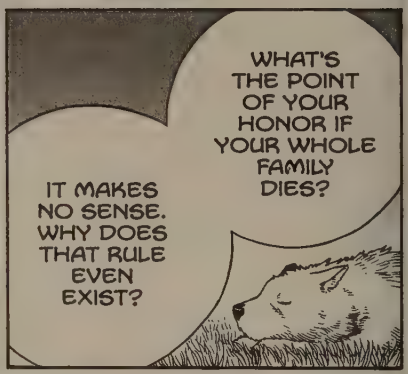

ARE YOU ASLEEP NOW...?
KARLI?

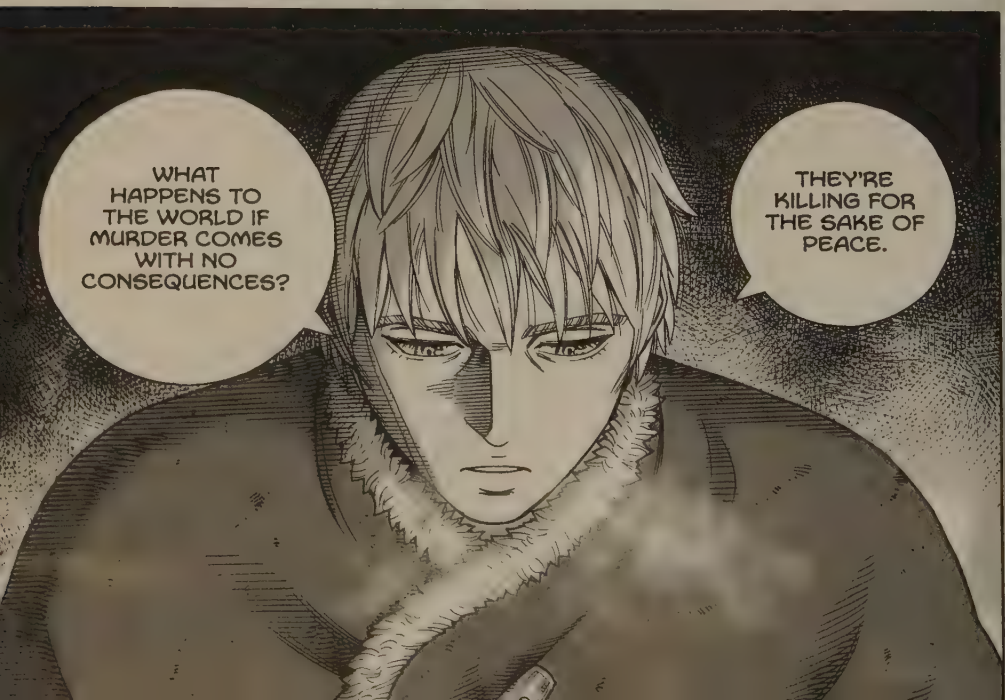

POP

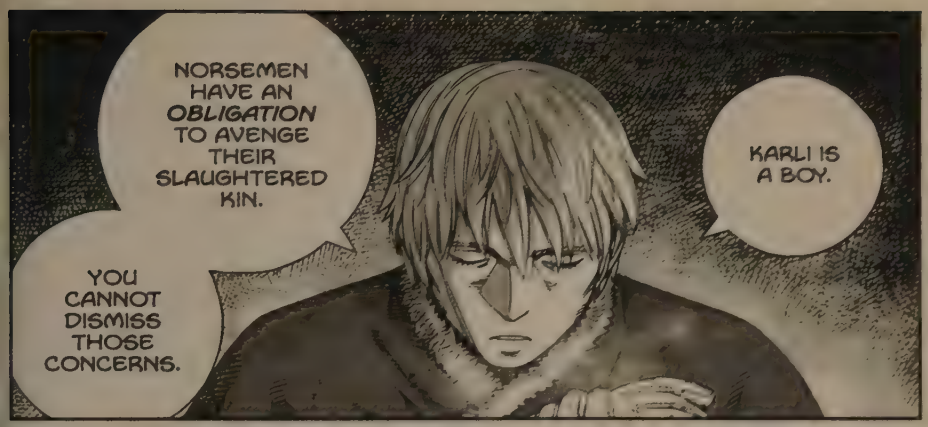
SHHHH
SNEAK
SNEAK

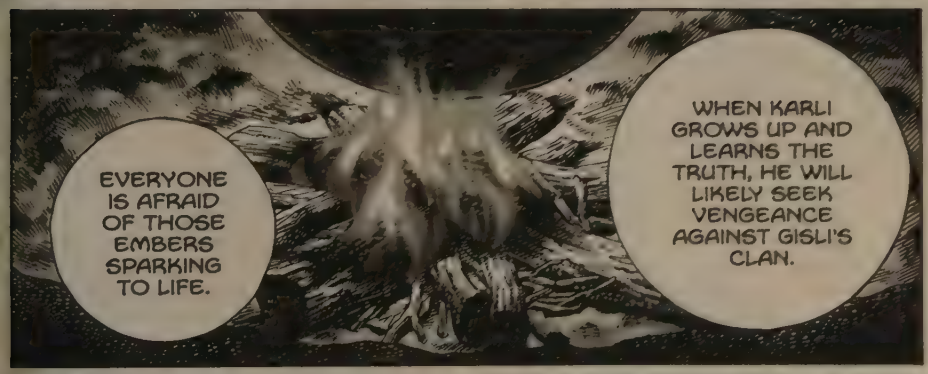
...THIS OBLIGATION TO KILL EACH OTHER DOESN'T ACTUALLY DO ANYTHING FOR ANYONE!
YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW THAT?!
WHAT I'M SAYING IS...


...BECAUSE IT'S NOT JUST THE HONOR OF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED THAT MATTER.
CRAK

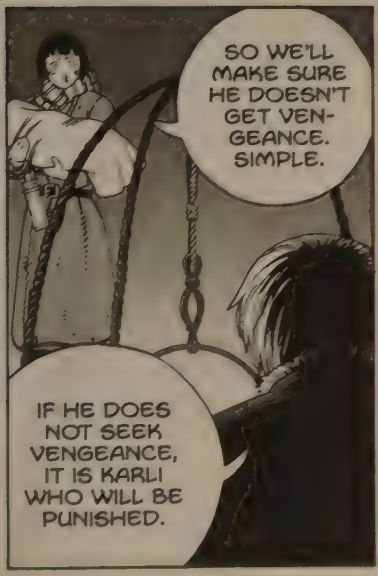

WHAT'S THE POINT OF YOUR HONOR IF YOUR WHOLE FAMILY DIES?
IT MAKES NO SENSE. WHY DOES THAT RULE EVEN EXIST?


WHAT HAPPENS TO THE WORLD IF MURDER COMES WITH NO CONSEQUENCES?
THEY'RE KILLING FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE.

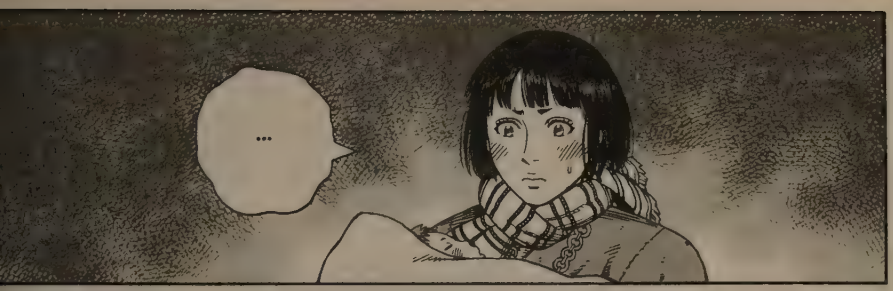

NORSEMEN HAVE AN *OBLIGATION* TO AVENGE THEIR SLAUGHTERED KIN.
YOU CANNOT DISMISS THOSE CONCERNS.
KARLI IS A BOY.


EVERYONE IS AFRAID OF THOSE EMBERS SPARKING TO LIFE.
WHEN KARLI GROWS UP AND LEARNS THE TRUTH, HE WILL LIKELY SEEK VENGEANCE AGAINST GISLI'S CLAN.

COWARDS ARE SHUNNED, OUTCAST FROM SOCIETY.
THAT'S WHY NORSEMEN HAVE AN OBLIGATION.

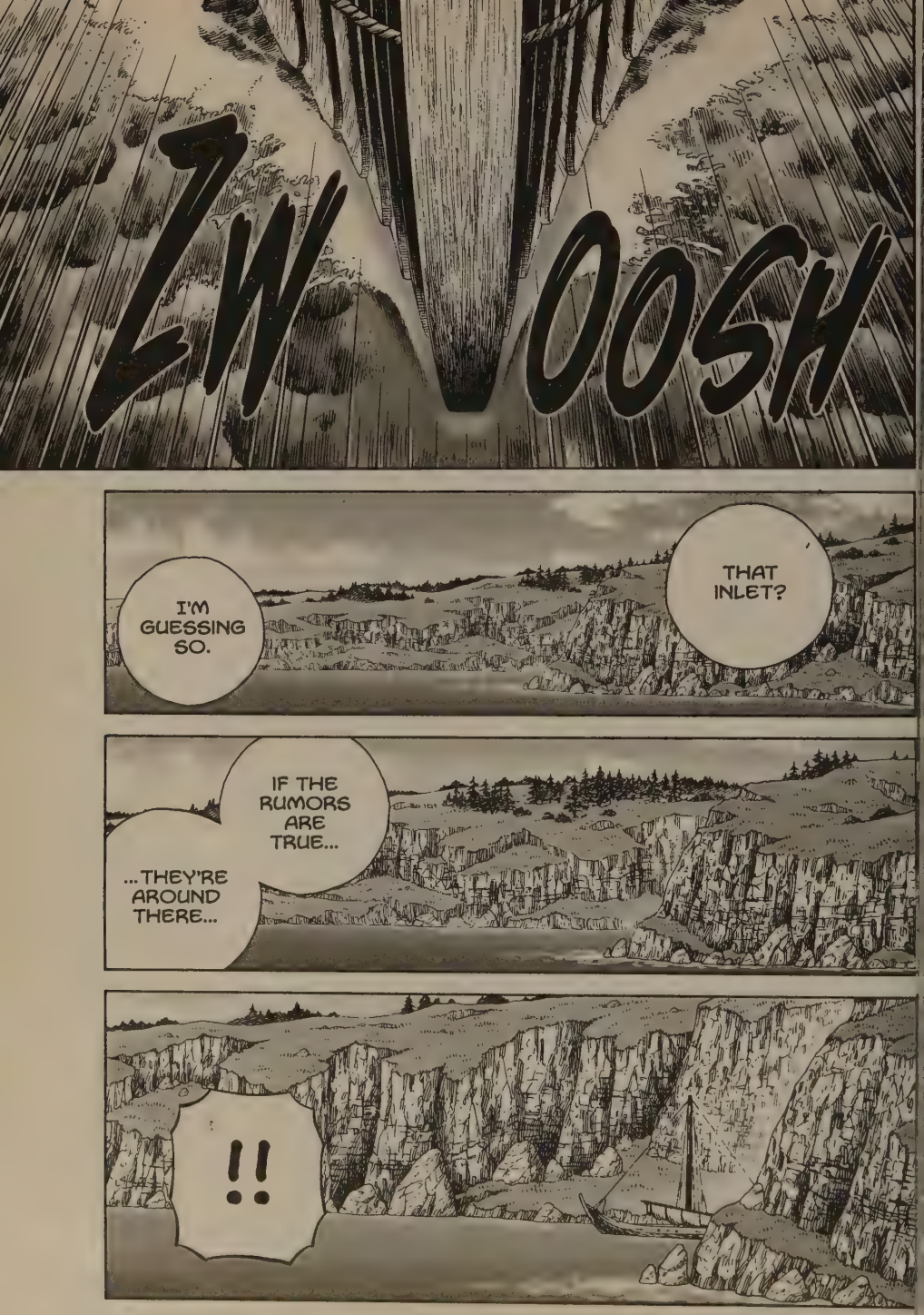

SO WE'LL MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T GET VENGEANCE. SIMPLE.
IF HE DOES NOT SEEK VENGEANCE, IT IS KARLI WHO WILL BE PUNISHED.

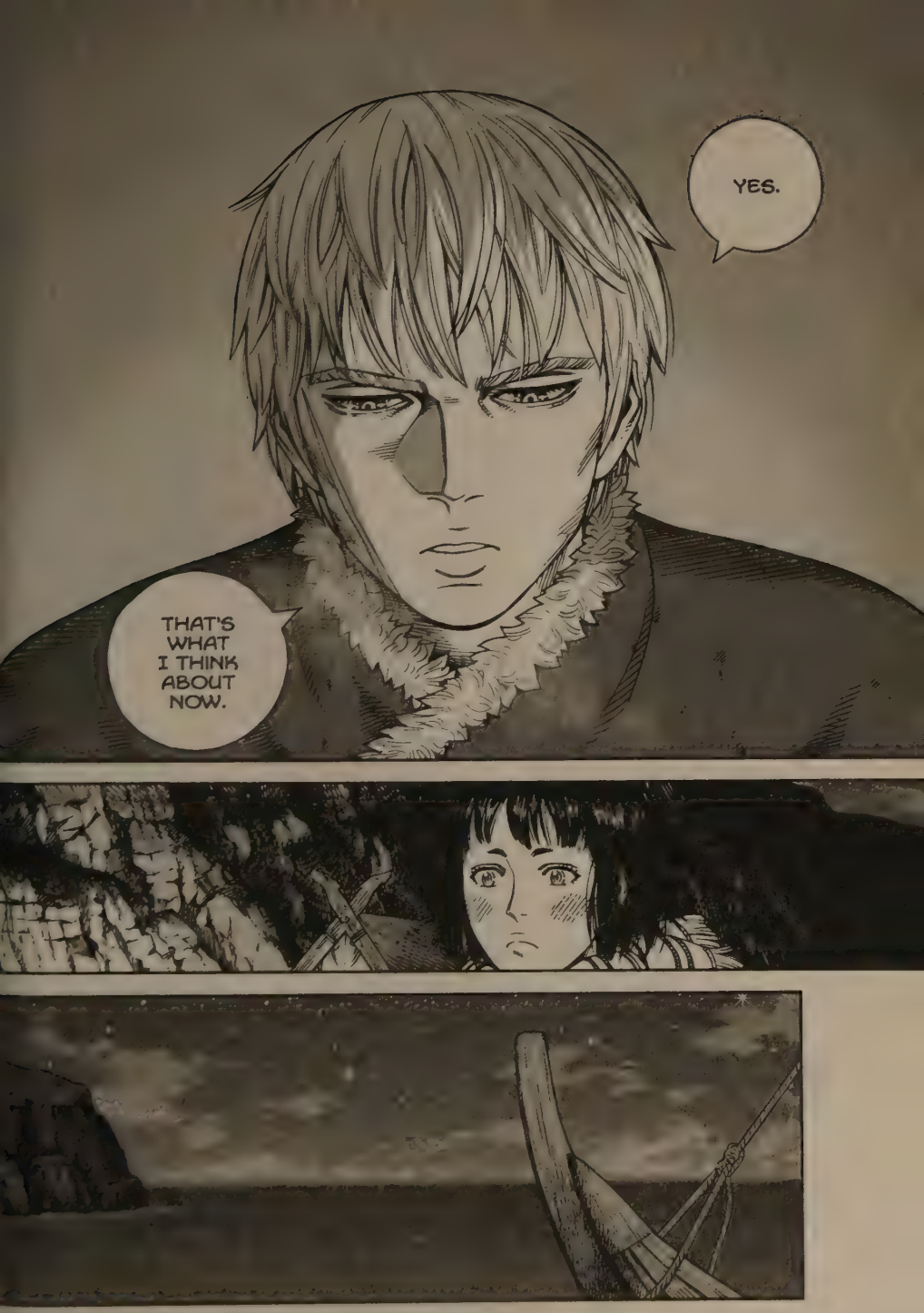
...YOU CAN'T CALL THAT PEACE.
BUT...
...
NO.
I AGREE.
ISN'T THERE... SOME-THING...
...ELSE?
IS THAT THE ONLY WAY?

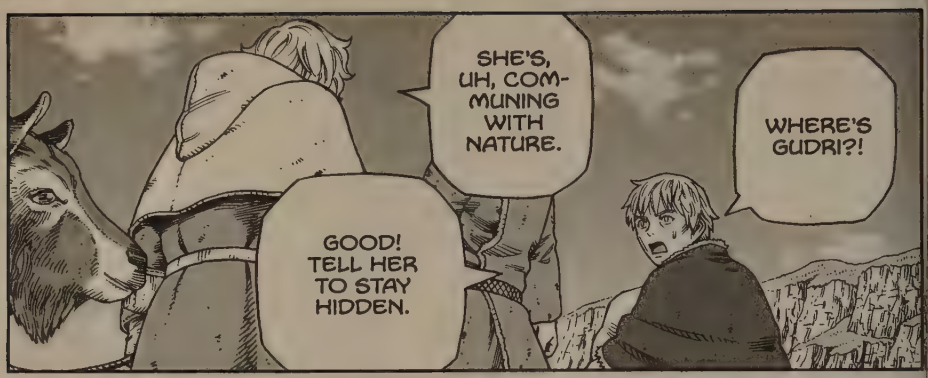

...

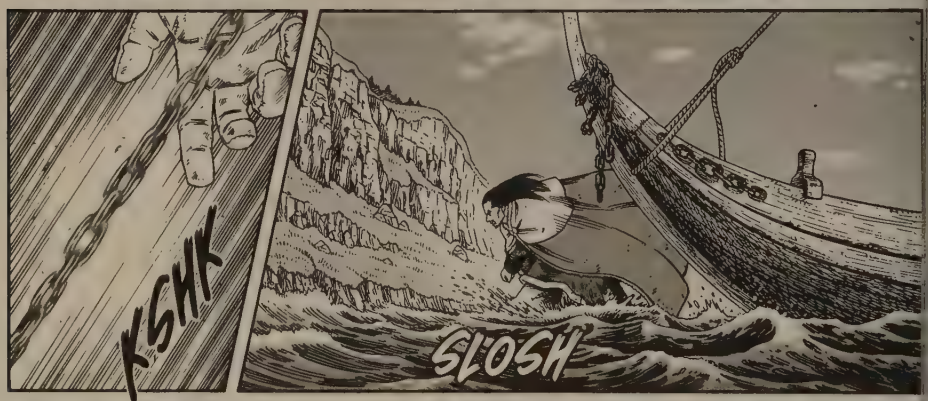
IF THAT RULE IS UPHELD WITH STRICT VIGILANCE, EVERYONE THINKS TWICE ABOUT KILLING.
NOT ALLOWING ANY EXCEPTIONS IS CRUCIAL TO THIS.
A MURDERER...
...WILL ALWAYS BE MET WITH VENGEANCE.

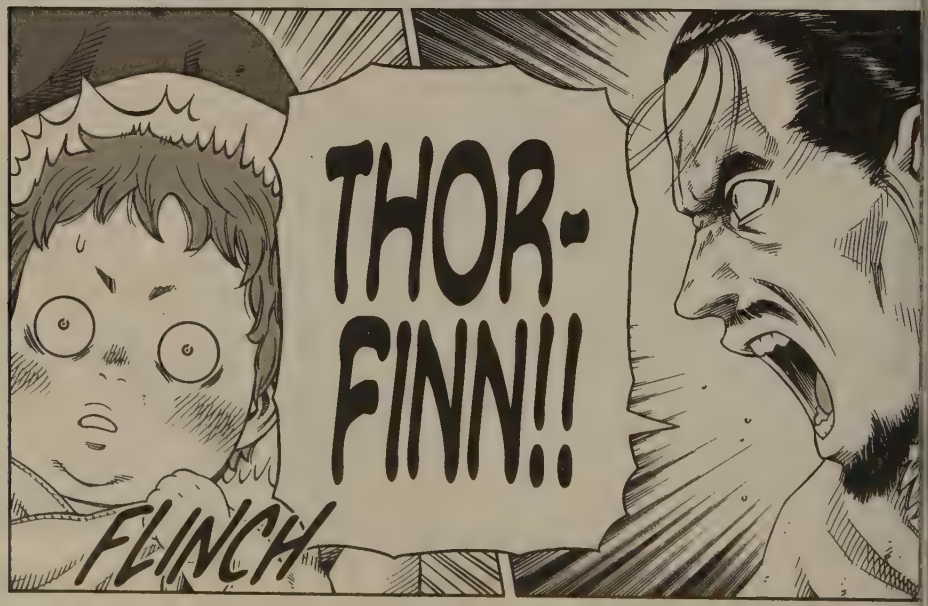
THE CRUELER THE OUTCOME, THE FIRMER THE LESSON.
OBLIGATORY VENGEANCE...
...EXISTS FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE FOR ALL.


ZWOOSH
THAT INLET?
I'M GUESSING SO.
IF THE RUMORS ARE TRUE...
...THEY'RE AROUND THERE...
!!


YES.
THAT'S WHAT I THINK ABOUT NOW.


GOOD! TELL HER TO STAY HIDDEN.
SHE'S, UH, COMMUNING WITH NATURE.
WHERE'S GUDRI?!


KSHK
SLOSH


THOR-FINN!!
FLINCH

I'VE CAUGHT YOU, THORFINN, YOU SLIPPERY SCALA-WAG!!

AHAAA!!

WUHH!

...SIXTEEN DAYS IN THE MAKING!!

THIS IS A FATED MEETING...

ARE YOU JOKING?!

THAT'S SIGURD!

THEY CHASED US ALL THE WAY HERE?!

GOTTA GIVE HIM A HAND FOR THAT.

...SHE...
WHAT...?!

PA-GWAAAAAA

YOU KIDNAPPER!!

WOOF!

WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!

GIVE ME BACK MY LIFE!!

NWAAAAHH

FGWA

WOOF!

YOU KIDNAPPER!

WOOF!

GIVE ME BACK GUDRID.

WOOF!

WHAT?!

WOOF!

AAA

GRRLL

YOU MADE HIM CRY! STOP SHOUTING!

WHAT IS THAT BABY'S PROBLEM?! SHUT IT UP!

MAGY

AA

THIS IS BAD.

THIS IS VERY, VERY BAD...

WOOF! WOOF!

SHUT UP! WE'VE GOT BIGGER PROBLEMS RIGHT NOW!!

AA

AA

GIVE BACK GUDRID!!

GRRRR

WOOF-WOOF

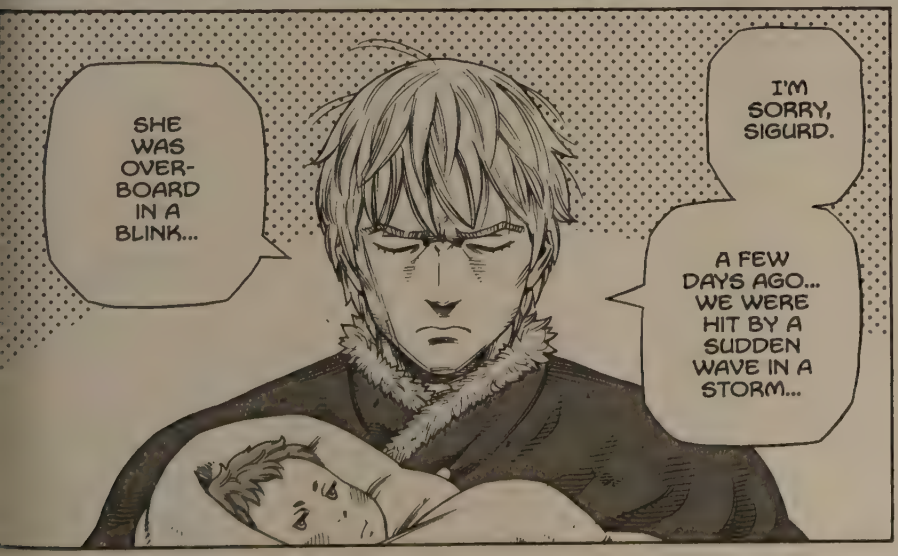
WWWOOF

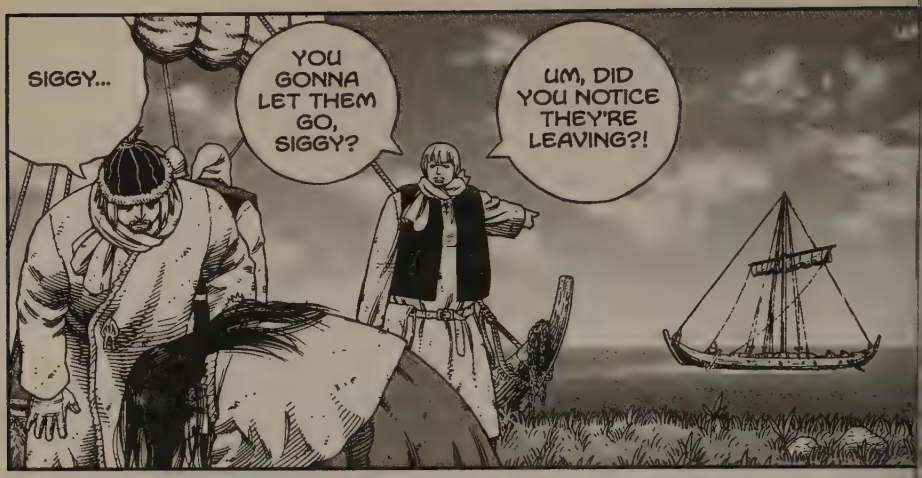
WOOF!

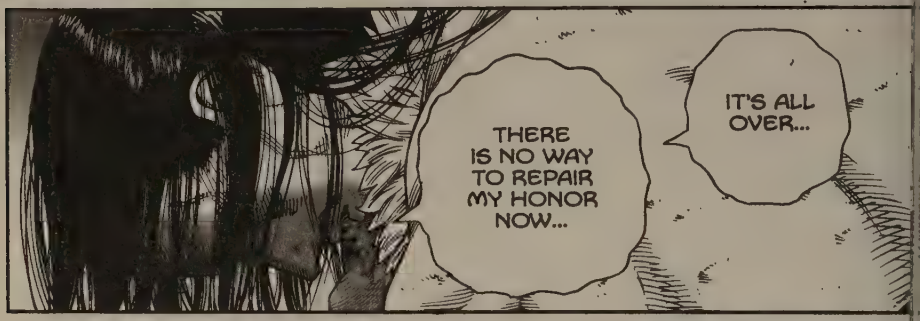
WOOF!

...
IT'S ALL DONE.
IS THE SHIP LOADED?
EINAR, TAKE KARLI.
GET ON THE SHIP AND WAIT.
BE CAREFUL, HIS CHAINS HAVE A LONG REACH.

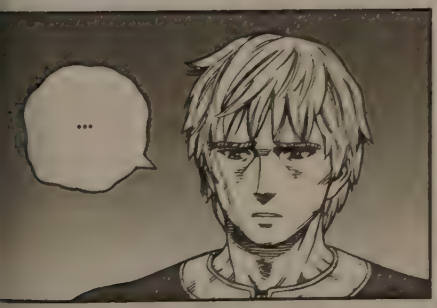
...IS DEAD?!
GUDRID...

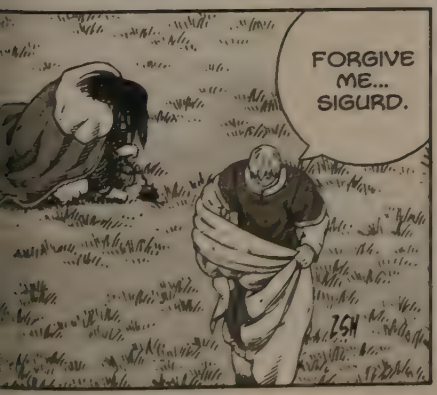

SHE WAS OVER-BOARD IN A BLINK...
I'M SORRY, SIGURD.
A FEW DAYS AGO... WE WERE HIT BY A SUDDEN WAVE IN A STORM...


SIGGY...
YOU GONNA LET THEM GO, SIGGY?
UM, DID YOU NOTICE THEY'RE LEAVING?!

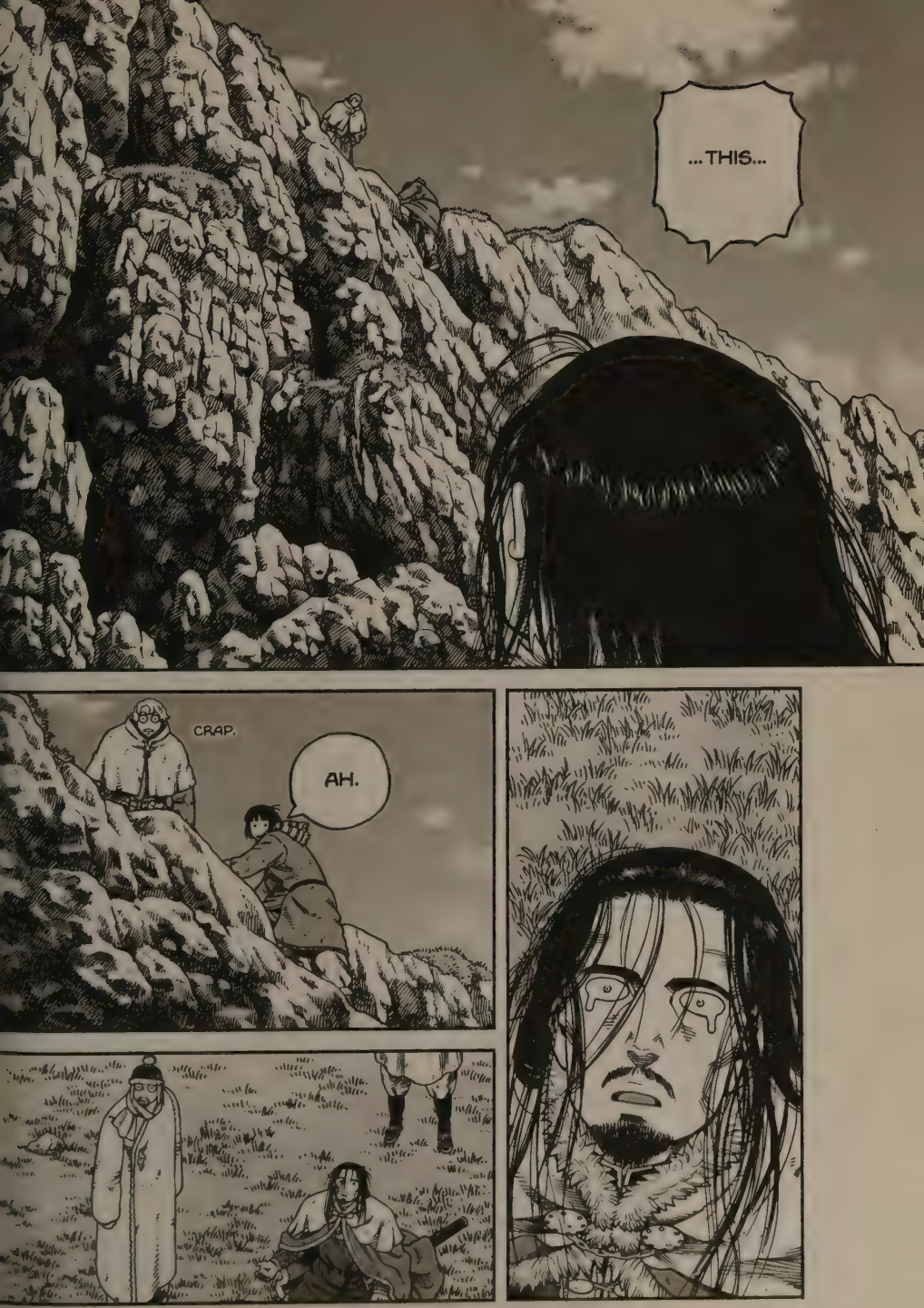

THERE IS NO WAY TO REPAIR MY HONOR NOW...
IT'S ALL OVER...

WHAT HAVE I DONE TO DESERVE...
GODS, I BESEECH YOU!!


...

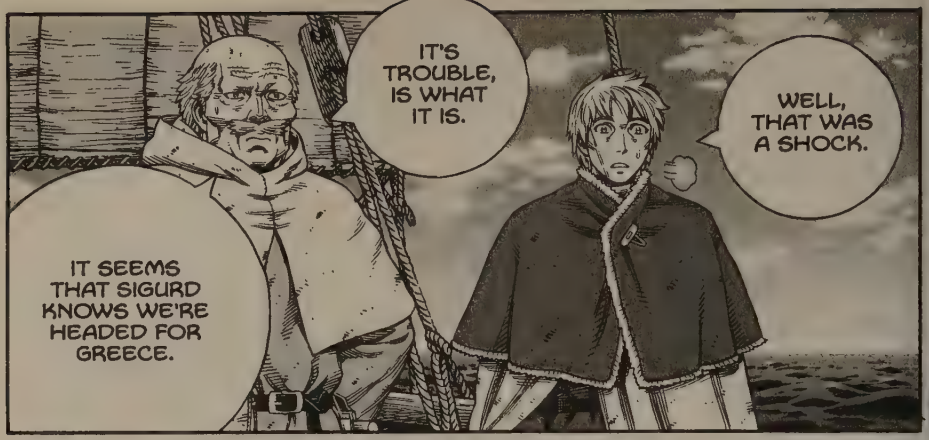

FORGIVE ME... SIGURD.
ZSH

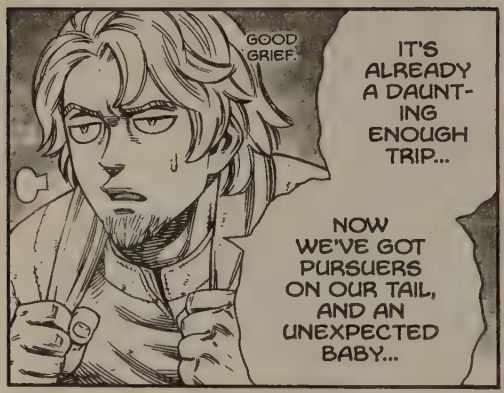
I'LL TEAR YOUR TONGUE OUT OF YOUR THROAT!!
VOM
VOM
VOM
YOU'RE ALIVE AND WELL AFTER ALL!!
WHUP
YEEP!
AHA! THERE IT IS!
JUMP, GUDRI!

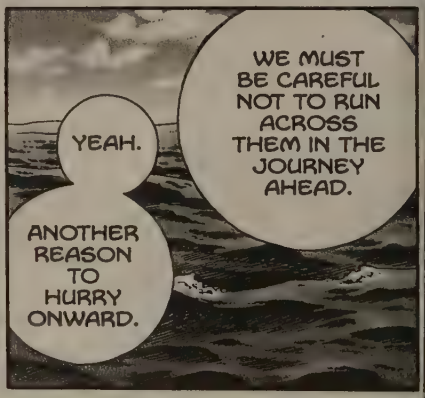

...THIS...
CRAP.
AH.

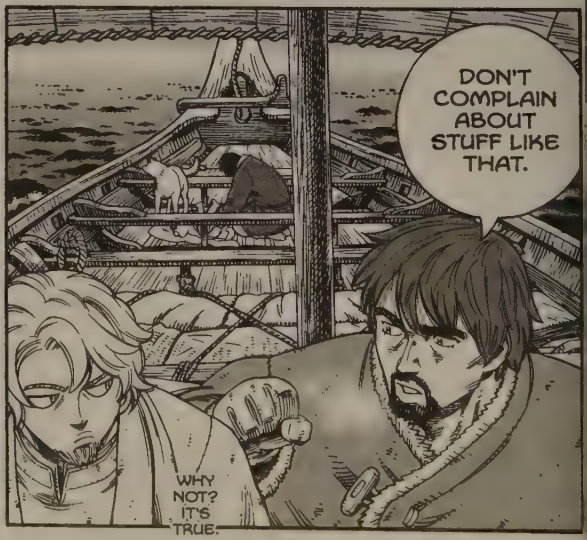
IT'S TOO SCARY.
WHAT? FROM UP HERE?!
HUFF
HUFF
AFTER THEM! JUMP OVER!!
SHIT!
WHAT ABOUT YOU, SIGGY?
WHY DON'T YOU JUMP?
NOT IN MIDWINTER.
NOPE, SORRY.
WHEN I SAY LEAP, YOU LEAP!!
THE WOMAN MADE THAT JUMP, YOU FOOL!!
CURSES!!
THAT VILLAIN LIED RIGHT TO MY FACE!!
COME ON! RUN BACK TO THE SHIP!!
YOU USELESS, BLUNDERING FOOLS!!
ARE YOU SAYING YOU CAN'T SWIM, SIGGY?

BLOOOSH
KERSPLAASH
WITH-DRAW AT TOP SPEED!
HURRY! ROW!

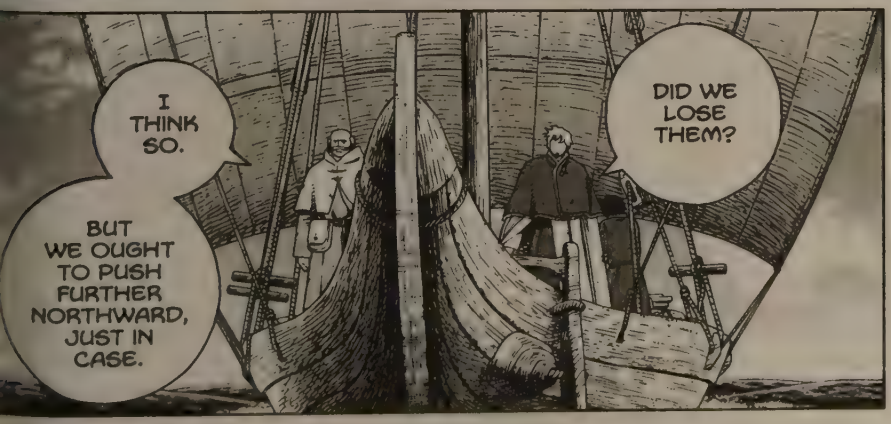

IT'S TROUBLE, IS WHAT IT IS.
WELL, THAT WAS A SHOCK.
IT SEEMS THAT SIGURD KNOWS WE'RE HEADED FOR GREECE.

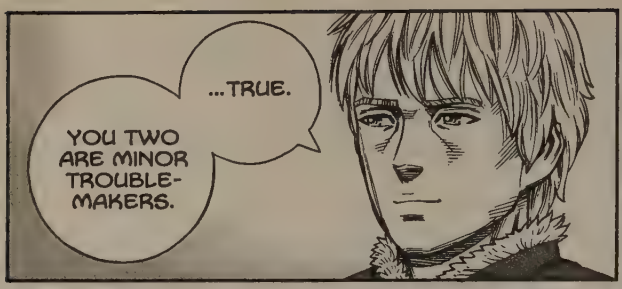

GOOD GRIEF.
IT'S ALREADY A DAUNT-ING ENOUGH TRIP...
NOW WE'VE GOT PURSUERS ON OUR TAIL, AND AN UNEXPECTED BABY...

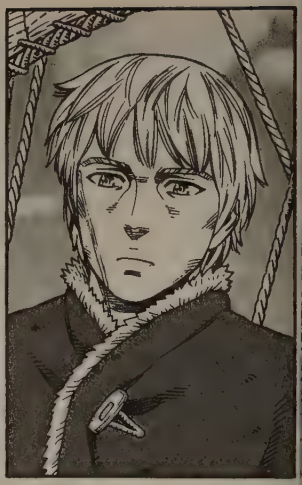

WE MUST BE CAREFUL NOT TO RUN ACROSS THEM IN THE JOURNEY AHEAD.
YEAH.
ANOTHER REASON TO HURRY ONWARD.

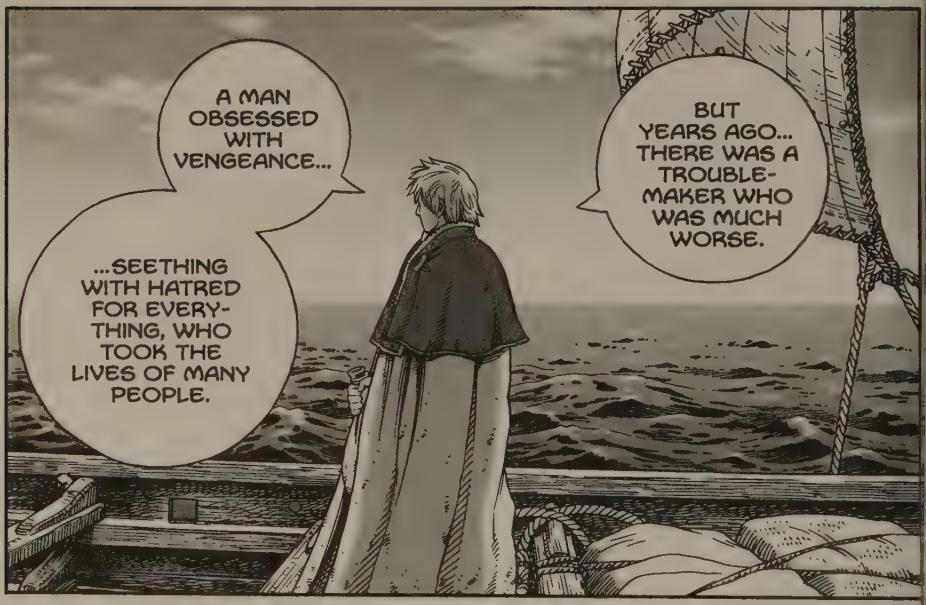

DON'T COMPLAIN ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT.
WHY NOT? IT'S TRUE.

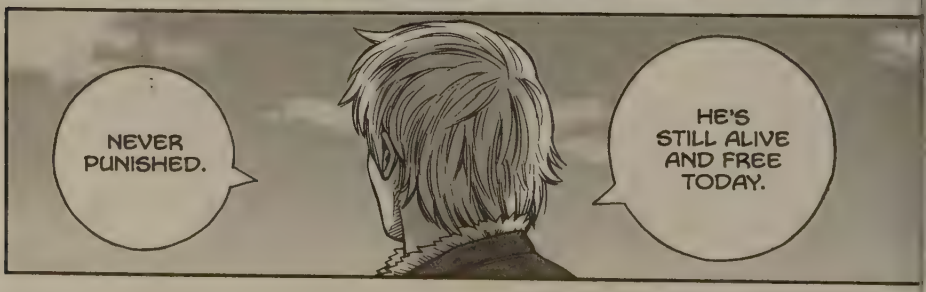
FWUP
FWUP
FWUP
FSHHHH




YOU TWO ARE MINOR TROUBLE-MAKERS.
...TRUE.




A MAN OBSESSED WITH VENGEANCE...
...SEETHING WITH HATRED FOR EVERY-THING, WHO TOOK THE LIVES OF MANY PEOPLE.
BUT YEARS AGO... THERE WAS A TROUBLE-MAKER WHO WAS MUCH WORSE.


NEVER PUNISHED.
HE'S STILL ALIVE AND FREE TODAY.

THORFINN...
WHY DID YOU EVEN BOTHER WITH ME AND KARLI?
I MEAN...
SORRY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN.
?
WHY DID YOU LET US ON THE SHIP IN THE FIRST PLACE?
YOU COULD HAVE LEFT US BEHIND TO FEND FOR OURSELVES.
WE'RE JUST TROUBLE.

CHAPTER 114:
THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED (1)

COMPARED TO HIM, YOU ARE NOTHING.

...?

YOU SAW TREES IN SHETLAND, TOO.

WHOAAA.

THEY'RE GROWING! A TON OF THEM!

THEY'RE LIKE...

THESE ARE ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SCALE.

...TREEEEEE...

BUT ALL THE ONES I'VE SEEN BEFORE THIS WERE MORE LIKE...

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

WELL, THIS MIGHT BE A STRANGE SIGHT TO SOMEONE WHO'S ONLY EVER LIVED IN GREENLAND AND ICELAND...

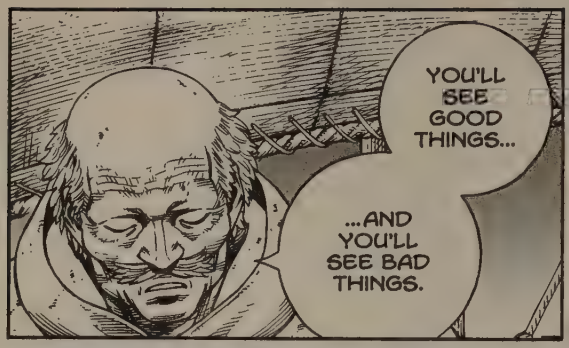
...BUT VIRTUALLY EVERYWHERE WE'RE GOING, IT'LL BE *TREE!!*

TREE!!

WHUP

WHUP

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?!
TREES?
TREES!!
NORWAY
WEST COAST OF
SCANDINAVIAN
PENINSULA
JANUARY 1019

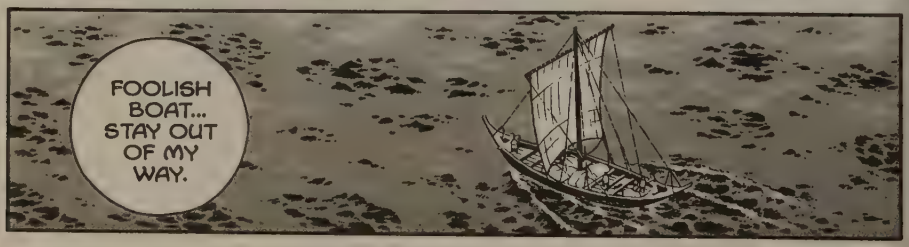

YOU'LL SEE GOOD THINGS...
...AND YOU'LL SEE BAD THINGS.

LIKE WHAT?!
EVEN I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN.

...I WANT TO SEE IT ALL.
I WANT TO KNOW EVERY-THING.

ATOP THE CLIFF.
THERE'S SOME-THING.
WHERE? I CAN'T SEE.

AHHHH...
TO BE HONEST...
THE FAROES AND SHETLAND WEREN'T MUCH DIFFERENT FROM ICELAND, THAT'S THE THING.
I JUST THOUGHT, "OH, THIS SEEMS ABOUT RIGHT."
North Pole
Iceland
Faroes
Shetland
CURRENTLY
Norway
Sweden
Scotland
North Sea
Baltic Sea
Denmark
Germany
EAST OF HERE IS THE MAIN-LAND.
MUCH STRANGER THINGS THAN TREES AWAIT YOU UP AHEAD.
YOU'LL HAVE MANY NEW EXPERIENCES.


FOOLISH BOAT... STAY OUT OF MY WAY.

SPLISH
YOU OKAY, THORFINN?

UUUAAA AAAGH HH

FLINCH

IT'S THE NIGHT DUTY CREW.

RAAAHHHH

WH-WHOA, THAT STARTLED ME!

FLAIL FLAIL

GO AHEAD AND WAKE HIM UP, GUDRID.

THORFINN ALWAYS DOES THAT.

OKAY.

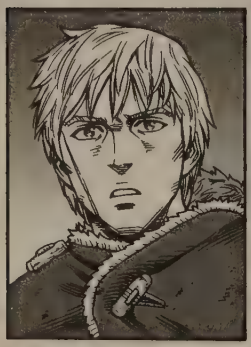
IT'S HARD TO GET USED TO THAT...

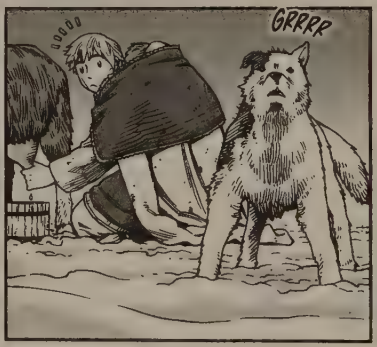
FSHHH
MMMM... PERSON.
...I THINK. SEEMED LIKE IT...
SO WHAT WAS IT YOU SAW?
PERSON? ANIMAL?

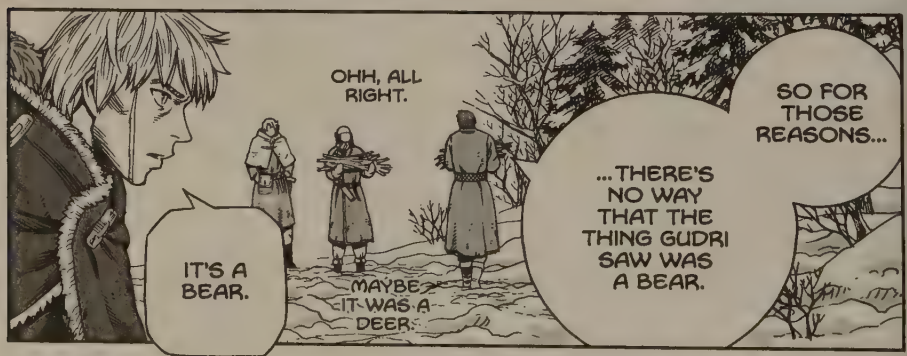
MM...
SORRY TO STARTLE YOU.
YOU WERE SCREAMING AND GROANING IN YOUR SLEEP.
THAT BAD OF A NIGHTMARE?
YEAH. THANK YOU.
OH, NO, IT'S NOTHING, REALLY.
I'M JUST A COWARD, THAT'S ALL.
UAH WAAAA-AAHHHH
OHH?
WELL, OKAY, THEN...
THERE'S FRESH WATER UP HEAD. WE AN USE IT TO MAKE MORE GRUEL.
TIME FOR HIM TO EAT, THEN.
HNNG-WAAAHH!!
GREAT, NOW THIS ONE'S SCREAMING!

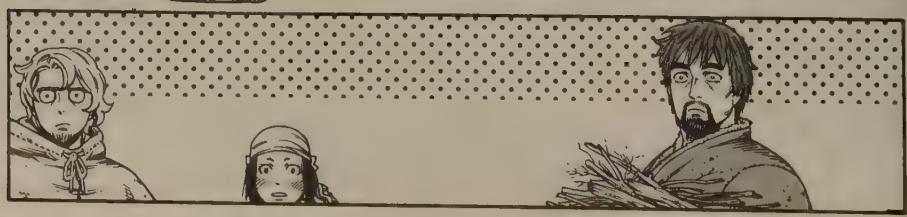
THE SAFEST WAY TO GET RID OF A BEAR IS TO WAIT UNTIL WINTER TO GET THEM WHILE THEY'RE SLEEPING.

THEY TOOK MANY SHEEP AND GOATS FROM US WHEN I WAS A FARMER IN ENGLAND.

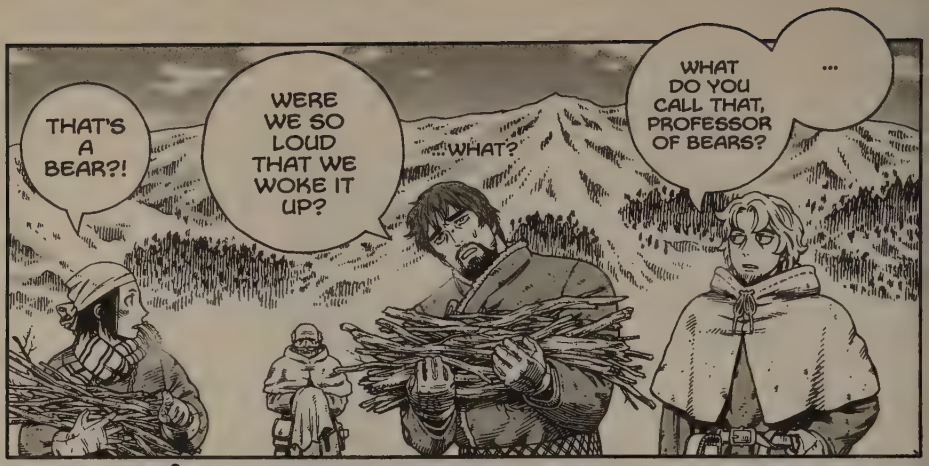


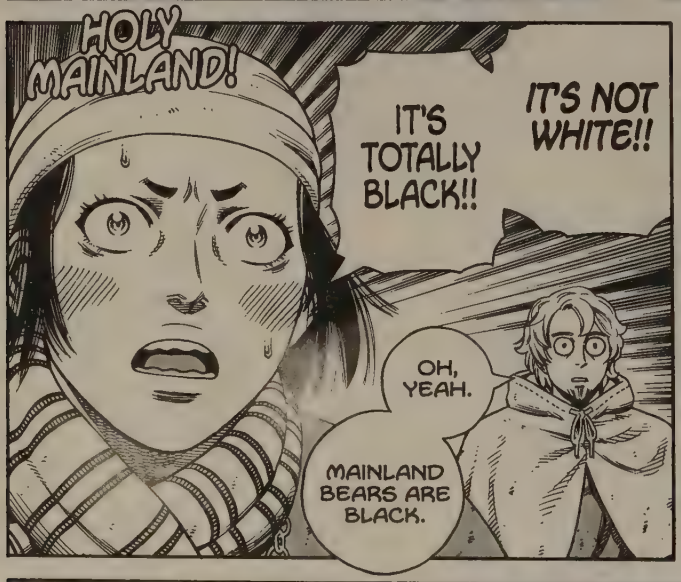


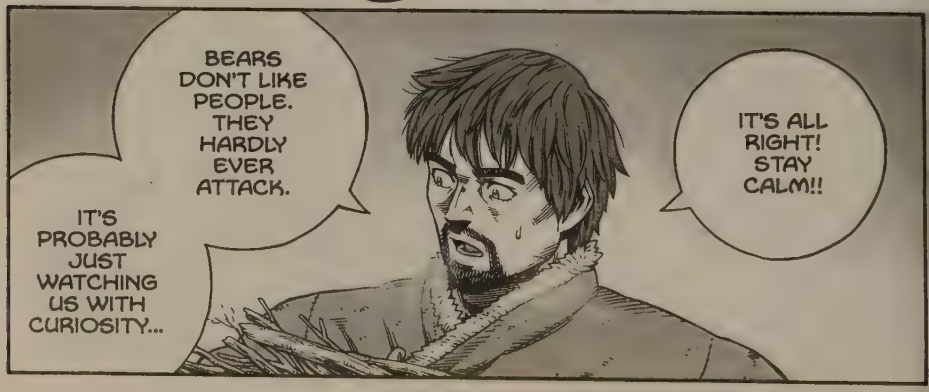




WHEN BEARS STAND ON THEIR HIND LEGS, THEY LOOK HUMAN-ISH.
GRARR
IT WASN'T A BEAR?
REALLY?!
STOP SCARING GUDRI, BUG-EYES.
BUT IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY.
JANUARY? SLEEPING?
IT'S JANUARY NOW. THE BEARS ARE ALL SLEEP-ING IN THEIR HOLES.
OHHH...
THAT'S NOT LIKE THE BEARS IN GREEN-LAND...
DUNNO. BUT PROBABLY.
DOESN'T MATTER. BEARS HIBERNATE. THAT MEANS THEY SLEEP ALL THROUGH THE WINTER.
THAT LONG?!
WITHOUT FOOD OR WATER?!
FROM WHEN THE LEAVES FALL TO WHEN THE NEW BUDS SPRING FORTH.


THAT'S A BEAR?!
WERE WE SO LOUD THAT WE WOKE IT UP?
...WHAT?
WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT, PROFESSOR OF BEARS?
...


HOLY MAINLAND!
IT'S TOTALLY BLACK!!
IT'S NOT WHITE!!
OH, YEAH.
MAINLAND BEARS ARE BLACK.


BEARS DON'T LIKE PEOPLE. THEY HARDLY EVER ATTACK.
IT'S PROBABLY JUST WATCHING US WITH CURIOSITY...
IT'S ALL RIGHT! STAY CALM!!

DA-DA-DUM
DA-DA-DUM
DA-DA-DUM

IT'S BAD!

VERY BAD!

UM.

IS THIS BAD? IT SEEMS BAD...

SHIK

GUDRID, TAKE CARE OF KARLI! AND...

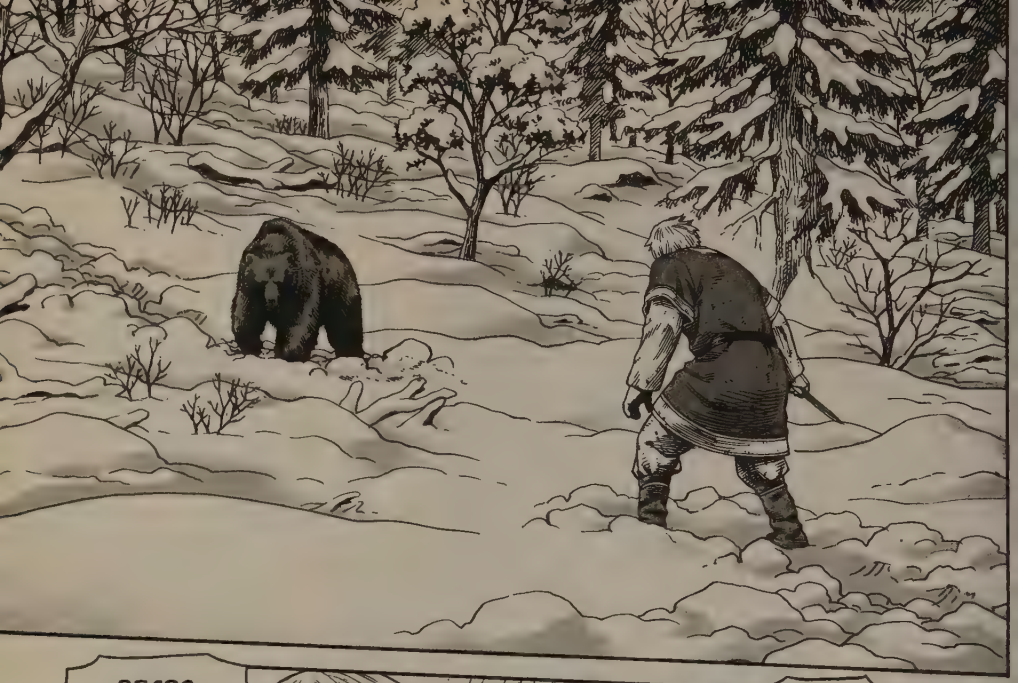
GET TO THE SHIP!

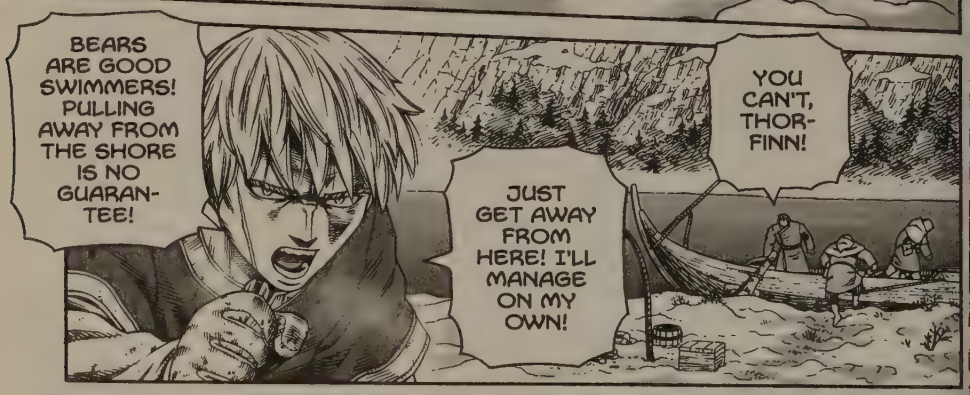
FWUP

THOR-FINN!

...I'M BORROW-ING YOUR KNIFE.

ZSH
DA-
DUM



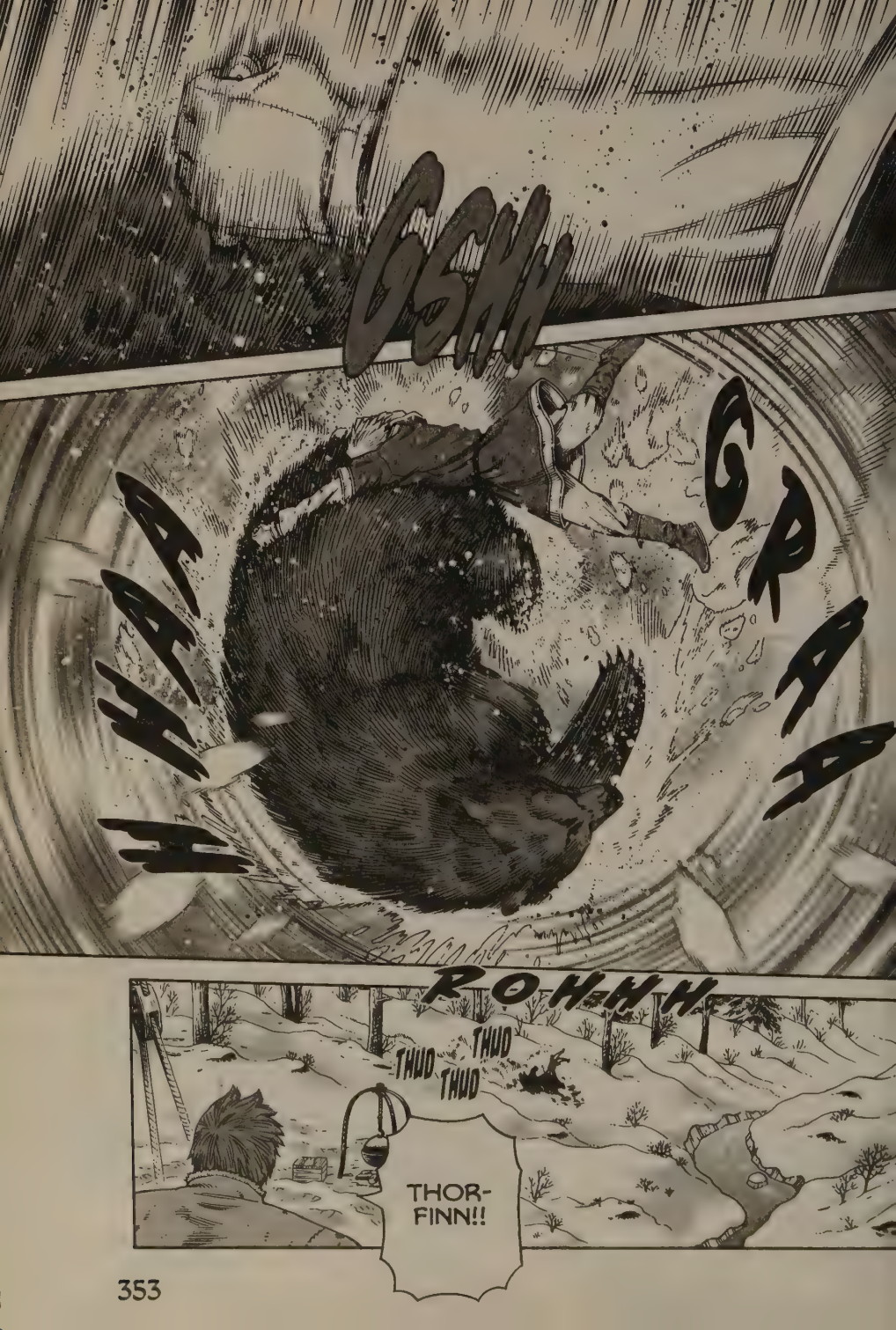

BEARS ARE GOOD SWIMMERS! PULLING AWAY FROM THE SHORE IS NO GUARAN-TEE!
JUST GET AWAY FROM HERE! I'LL MANAGE ON MY OWN!
YOU CAN'T, THOR-FINN!

GO BACK TO YOUR MOUN-TAIN...
PLEASE ...
KFFH
BRRH

RA
AA
AH
HH
DZZSH

BO OOM
DO YOUR WORST, FIEND!!!
FROM THE RIGHT!!
PS
HK

GROARR


GSHH
GRAAA
HHHA
ROHHH
THUD
THUD
THUD
THOR-FINN!!

GR OWL
FIGHT
GRAHH
THUD
IT REACTS...
...SO QUICKLY!!

SPLAT
WHUP
SHIT
GAK
THE SKULL'S TOO THICK. THE BLADE CAN'T CUT THROUGH!
SHIT!

GH.
LURK
LWIP
DMM
DWO

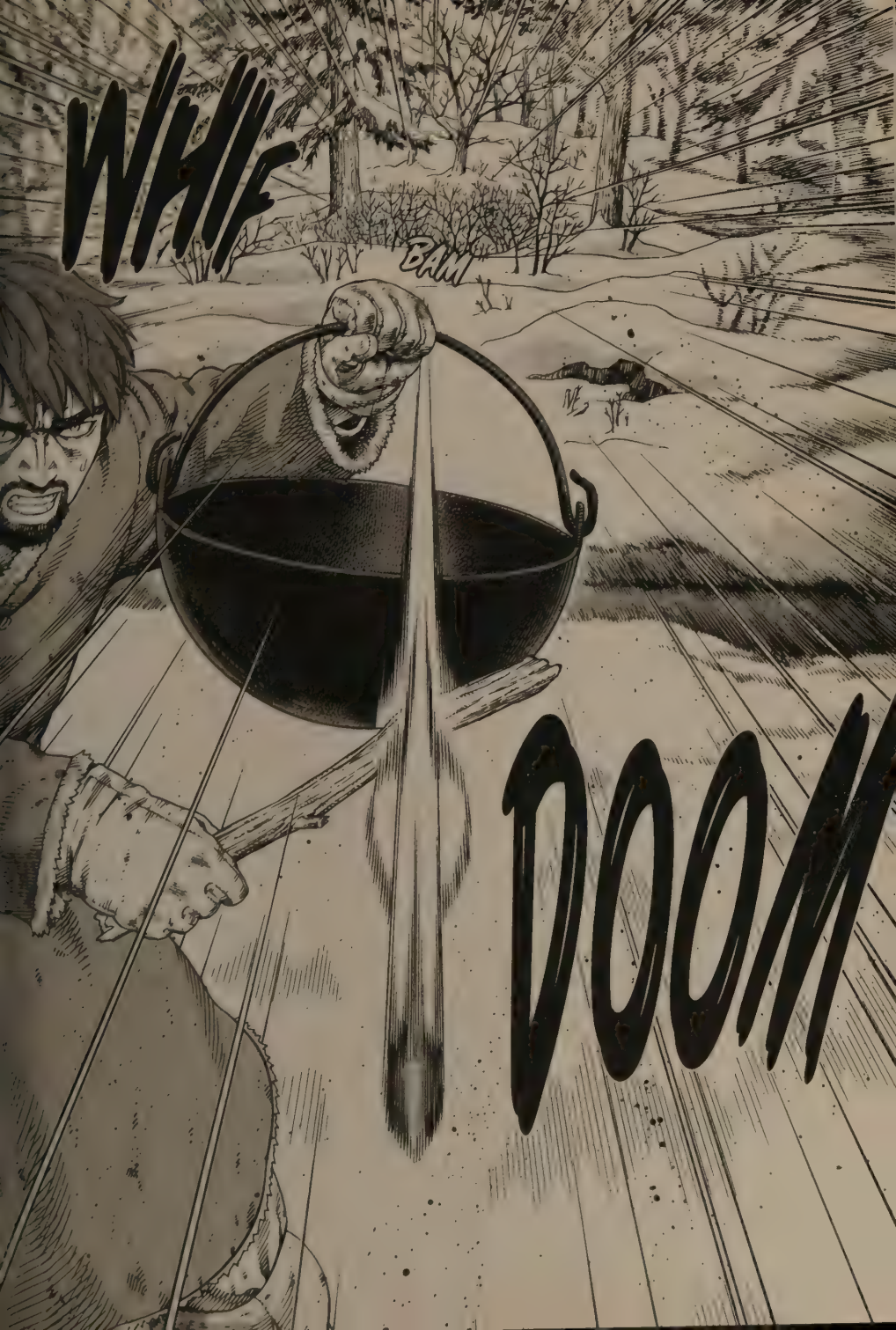
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
FLINCH
THIS WAY, YOU FURRY BEAST! COME AND EAT ME, IF YOU CAN!!
CLANG
RUN, THOR-FINN!!
WOOF
WOOF
WOOF
WOOF
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG

NO! GET BACK UP!
BA-THUD

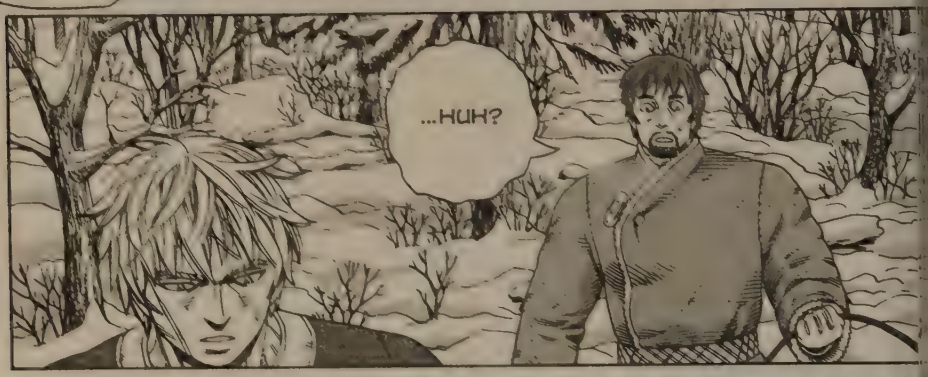
...THERE.
KRK

GROOARR
NO!!
EINAR!! WHAT ARE YOU DOING, YOU FOOL?!
KUHH
FFT

HURK
BCHUNK
KAH!
GAHK
GAH
WOOSH

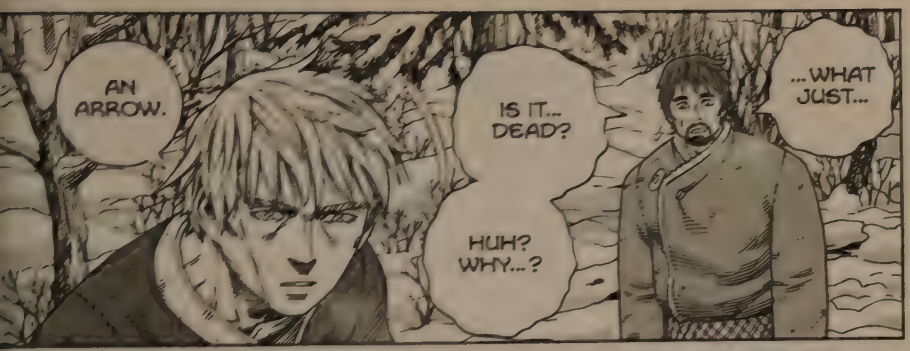

WHIP
BAM
DOOM

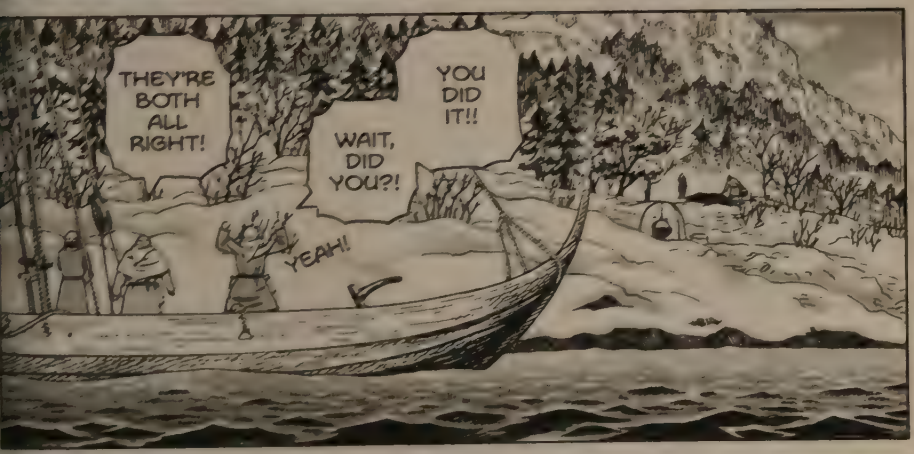
WAIT! SOME-THING'S WRONG.
THOR-FINN!! EINAR!!


...HUH?

GAH GROAR GFFK
!!
ZDUMM
GLUK

THANK YOU. YOU SAVED MY LIFE.
I'M SORRY FOR RUINING YOUR HUNT.
DID YOU USE POISON?
CUT DOWN A BEAR WITH ONE ARROW...

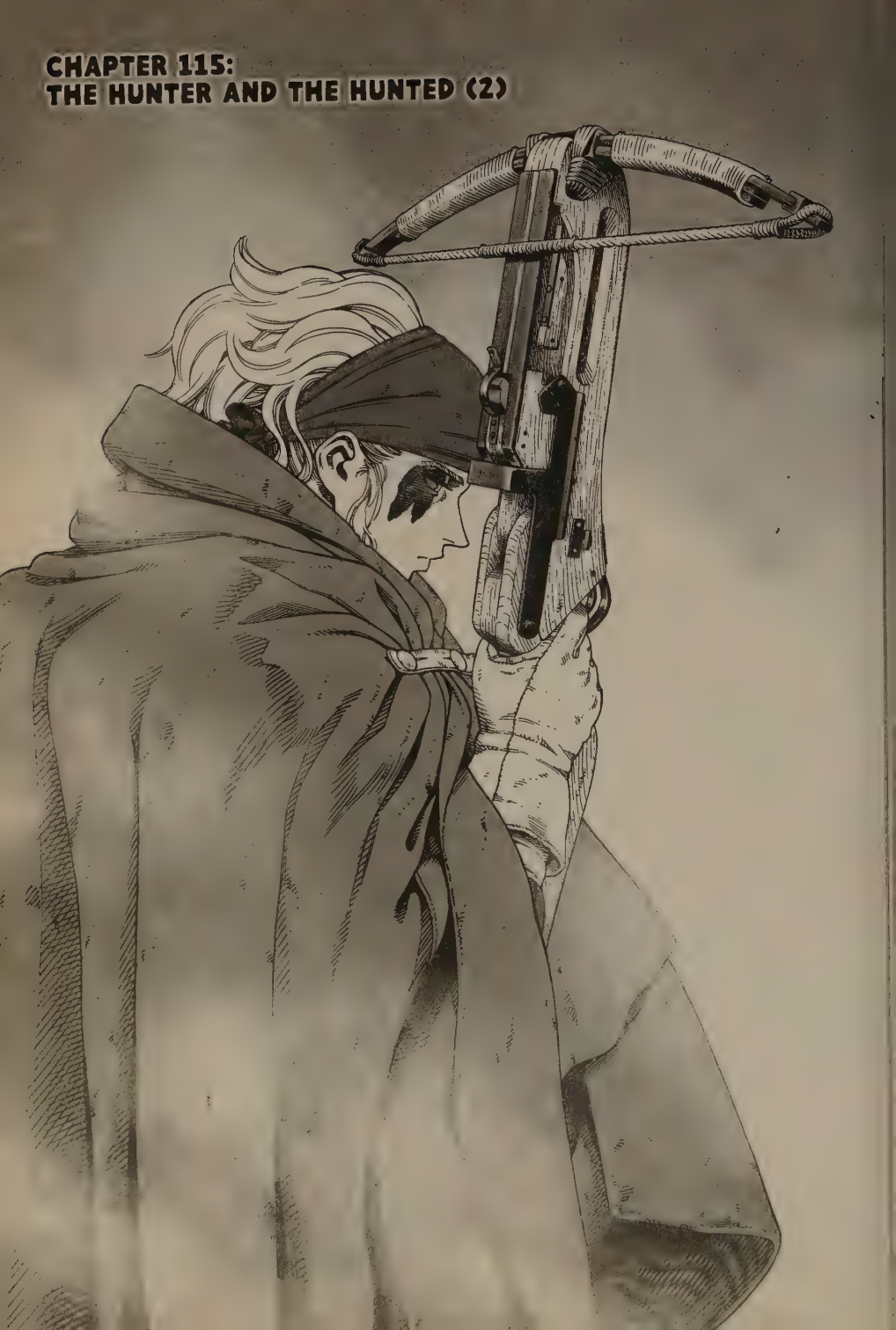

AN ARROW.
IS IT... DEAD?
HUH? WHY...?
...WHAT JUST...

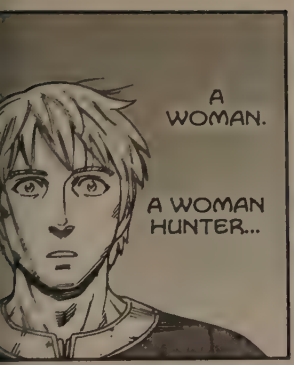

THEY'RE BOTH ALL RIGHT!
WAIT, DID YOU?!
YOU DID IT!!
YEAH!

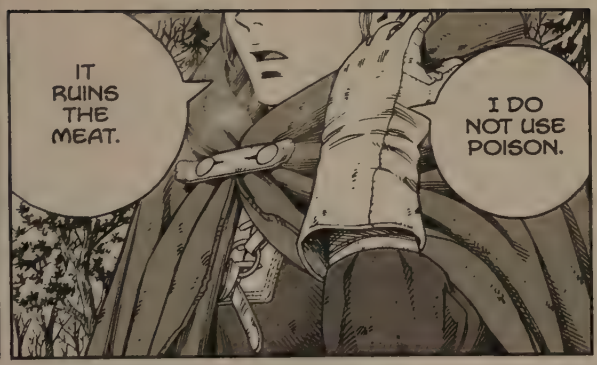
AND IT CAME FROM SO CLOSE...
I DIDN'T SENSE ANYONE AROUND.

A CROSS-BOW, THEN...
IT WAS JUST ONE SHOT.

CHAPTER 115:
THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED (2)

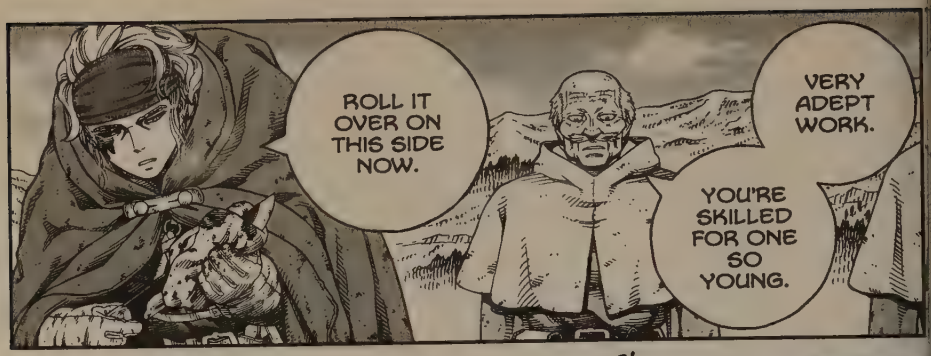


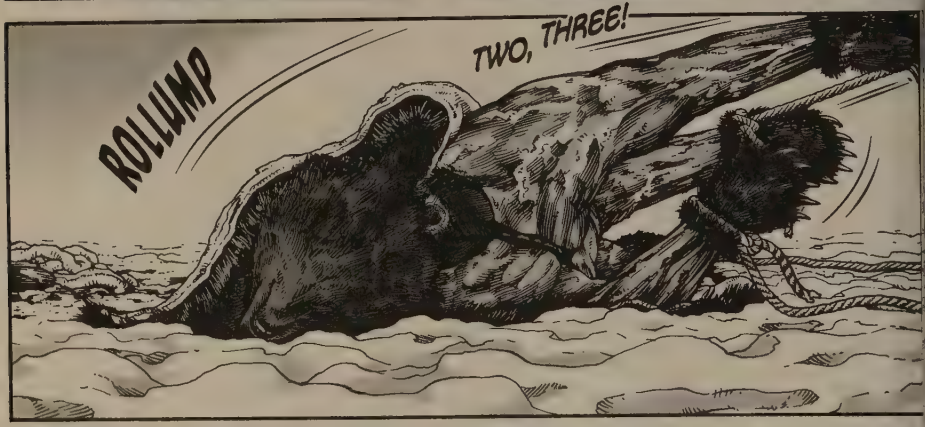


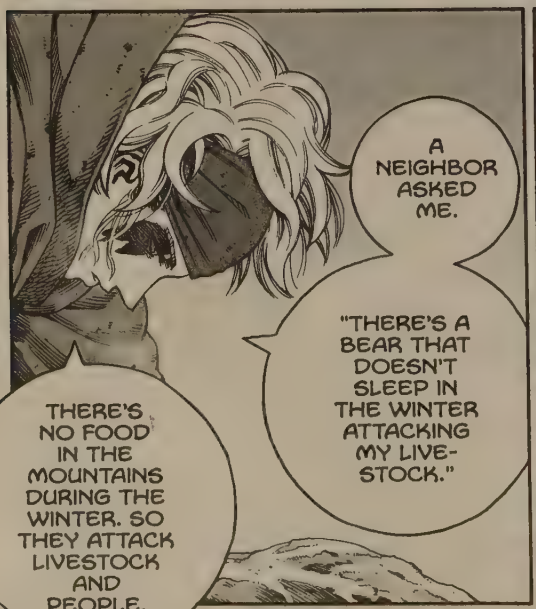


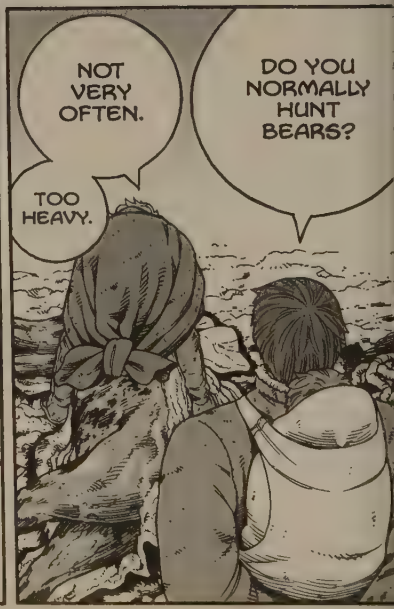
I DO NOT NEED POISON.

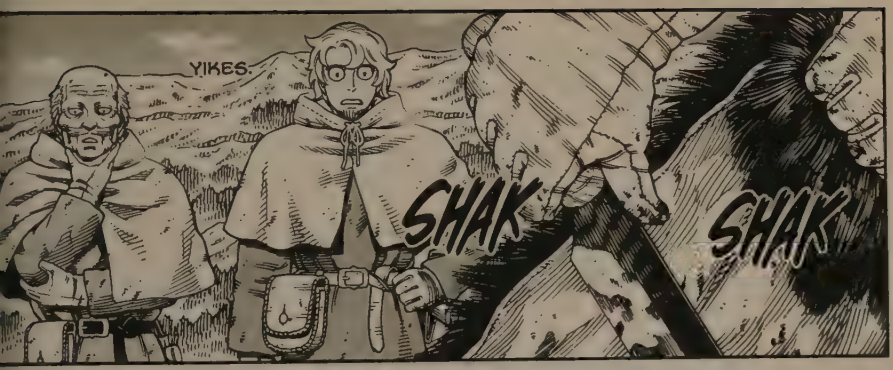
MY BOLTS ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO PIERCE A BEAR'S BONES.

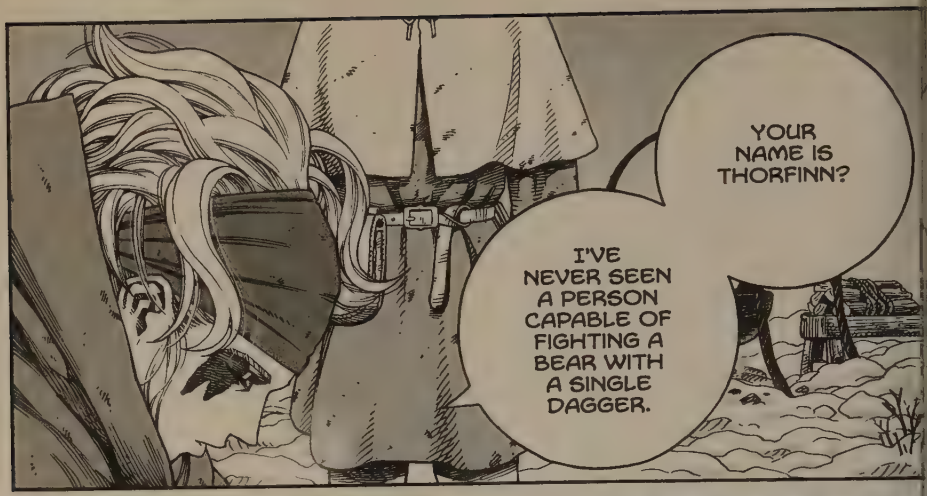

ROLL IT OVER ON THIS SIDE NOW.
VERY ADEPT WORK.
YOU'RE SKILLED FOR ONE SO YOUNG.

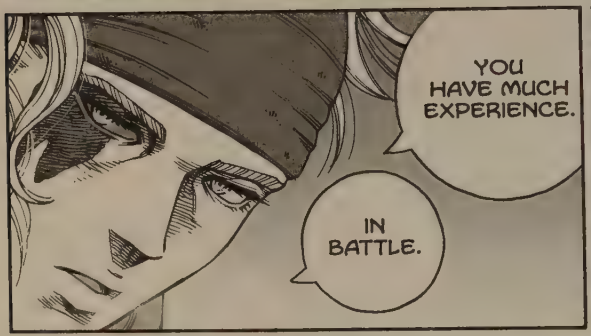

ROLLUMP
TWO, THREE!

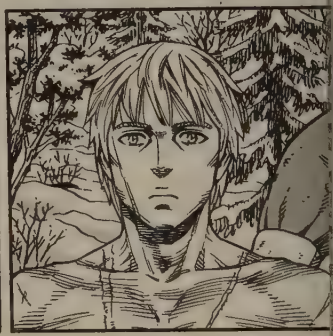

A NEIGHBOR ASKED ME.
"THERE'S A BEAR THAT DOESN'T SLEEP IN THE WINTER ATTACKING MY LIVE-STOCK."
THERE'S NO FOOD IN THE MOUNTAINS DURING THE WINTER. SO THEY ATTACK LIVESTOCK AND PEOPLE.

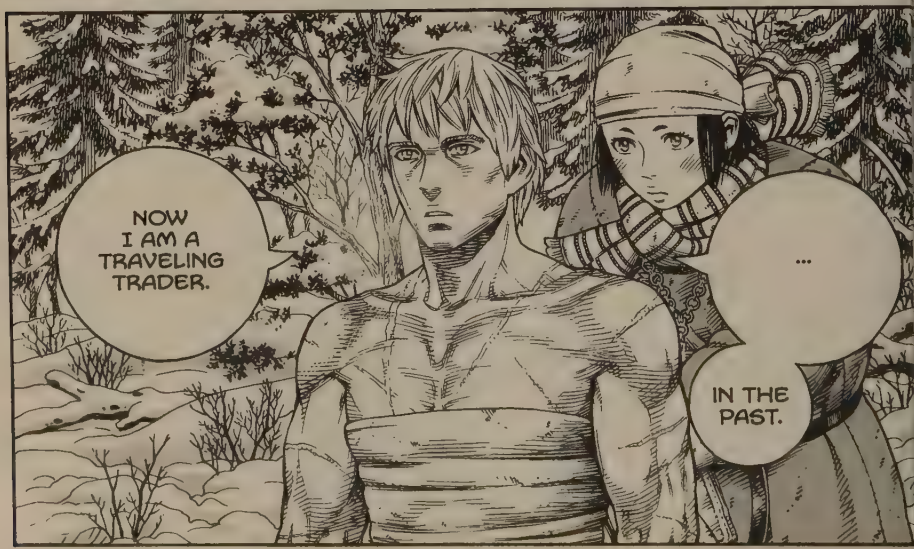

DO YOU NORMALLY HUNT BEARS?
NOT VERY OFTEN.
TOO HEAVY.


YIKES.
SHAK
SHAK


YOUR NAME IS THORFINN?
I'VE NEVER SEEN A PERSON CAPABLE OF FIGHTING A BEAR WITH A SINGLE DAGGER.


YOU HAVE MUCH EXPERIENCE.
IN BATTLE.




NOW I AM A TRAVELING TRADER.
...
IN THE PAST.

ONLY THIS ONE.
NO.
SCARY MAINLAND.
A-ARE THERE MANY OF THOSE BEARS AROUND?
THOR-FINN...
PHEW.

I WILL TAKE THE BEAR'S PELT.

YOU MAY HAVE THE MEAT AND FAT.

THEN SELL IT.

IT IS WORTH MONEY.

WOOH!

I COULDN'T EAT IT ALL!

IT IS.

IS IT GOOD?

I'VE NEVER EATEN BEAR BEFORE.

MY NAME IS HILD.

DAUGHTER OF HRAFNKELL OF THE "CALM FJORD."

HILD.

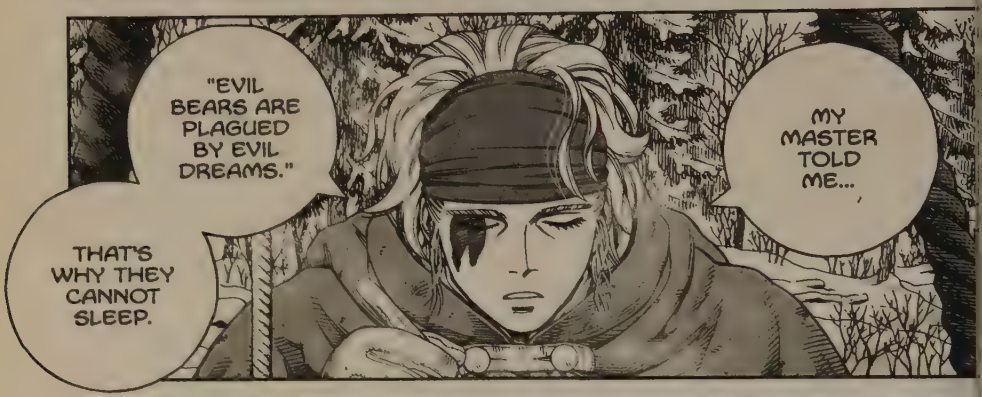
YOU SAVED MY LIFE. THANK YOU.

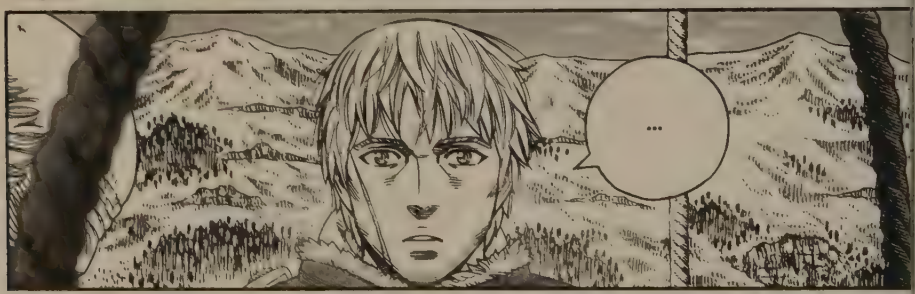
THORFINN, SON OF THORS.

...

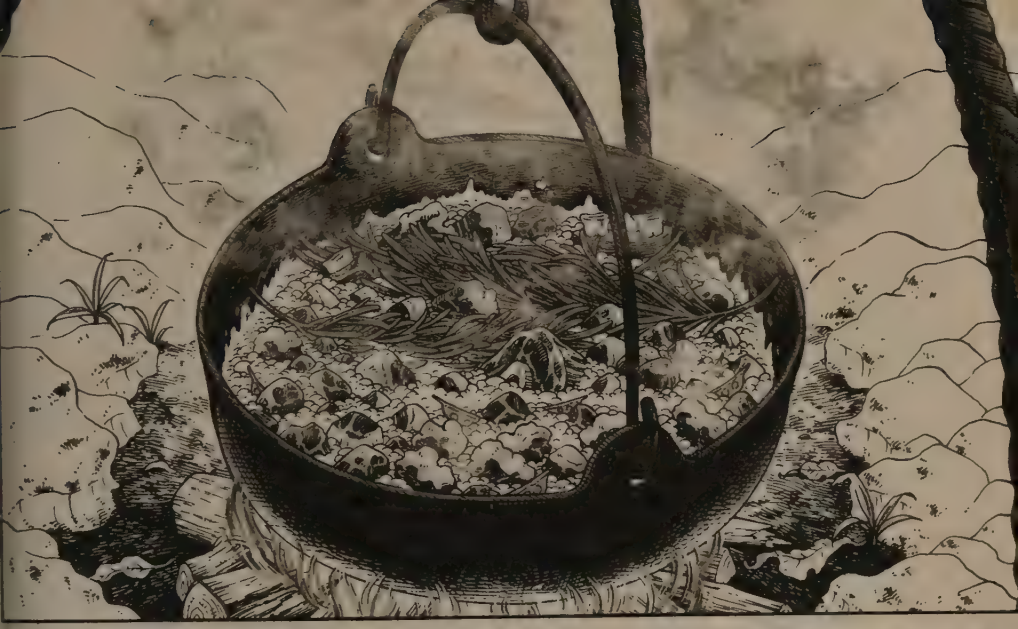
?

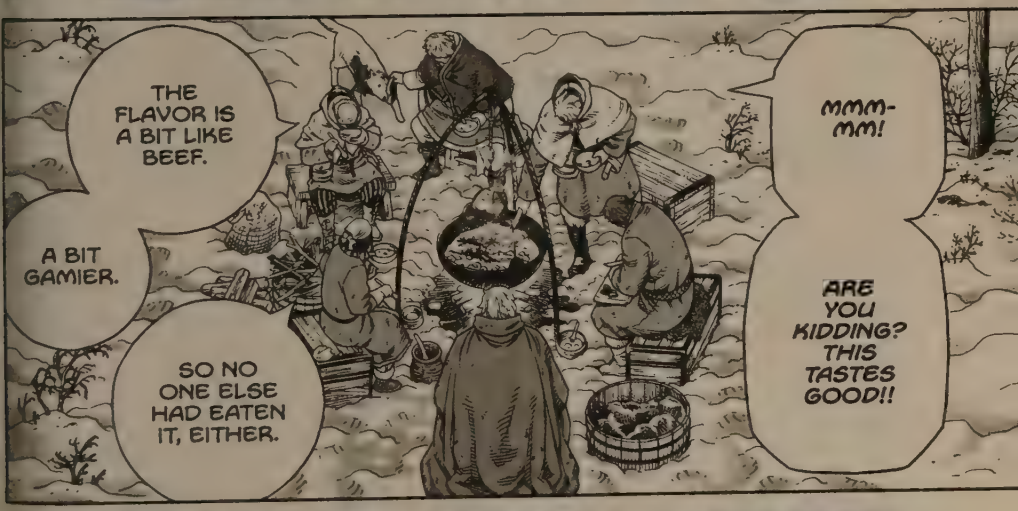
RIGHT, HILD?
IF HE'D STAYED ASLEEP IN HIS BURROW, HE'D NEVER HAVE BEEN EATEN.
THIS WAS ONE UNLUCKY BEAR.

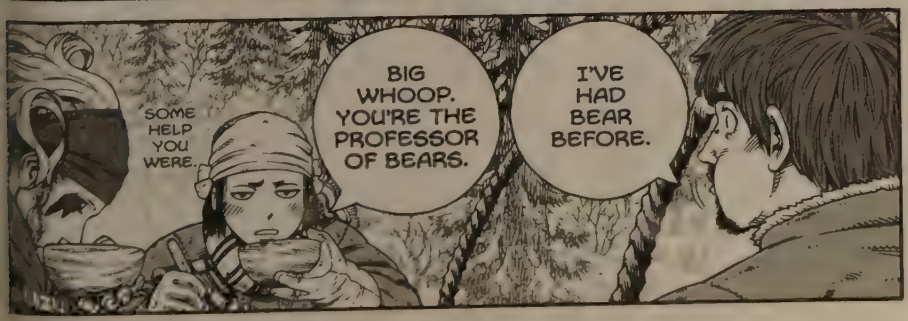

"EVIL BEARS ARE PLAGUED BY EVIL DREAMS."
THAT'S WHY THEY CANNOT SLEEP.
MY MASTER TOLD ME...

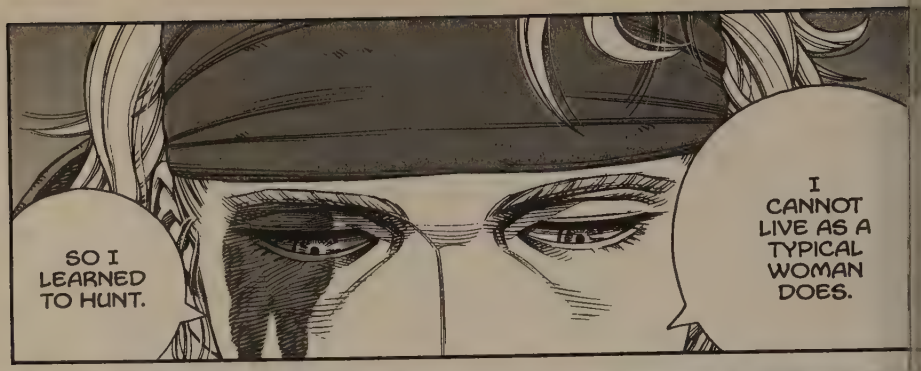

...

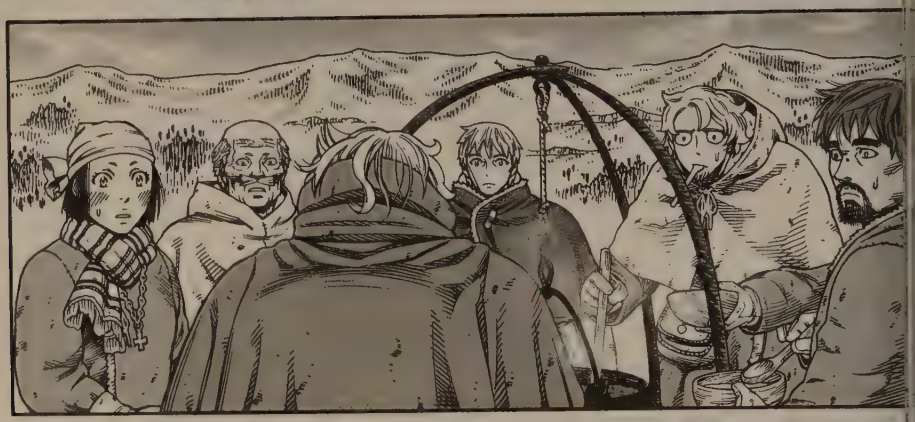
NEVER SEEN A WOMAN HUNTER BEFORE?
...WHAT?

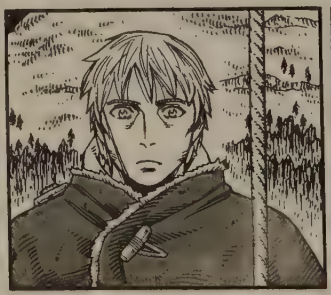


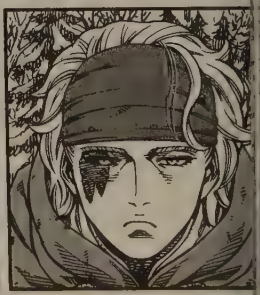

THE FLAVOR IS A BIT LIKE BEEF.
A BIT GAMIER.
SO NO ONE ELSE HAD EATEN IT, EITHER.
MMM-MM!
ARE YOU KIDDING? THIS TASTES GOOD!!

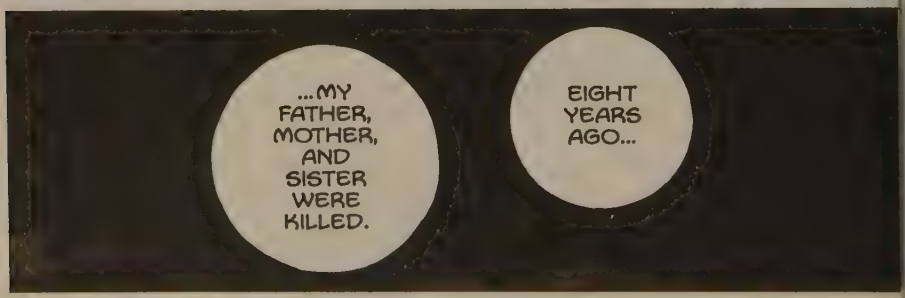

SOME HELP YOU WERE.
BIG WHOOP. YOU'RE THE PROFESSOR OF BEARS.
I'VE HAD BEAR BEFORE.


SO I LEARNED TO HUNT.
I CANNOT LIVE AS A TYPICAL WOMAN DOES.

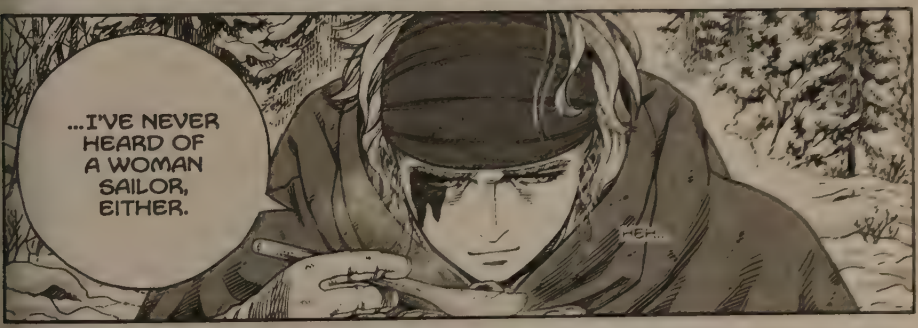




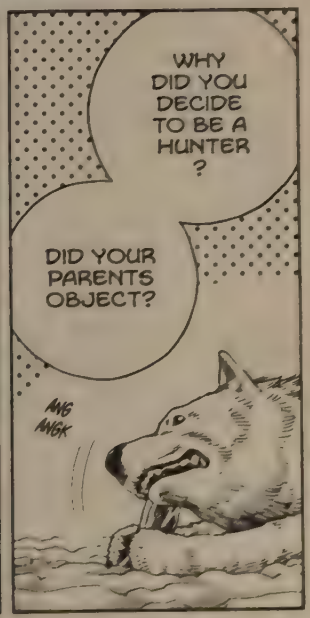


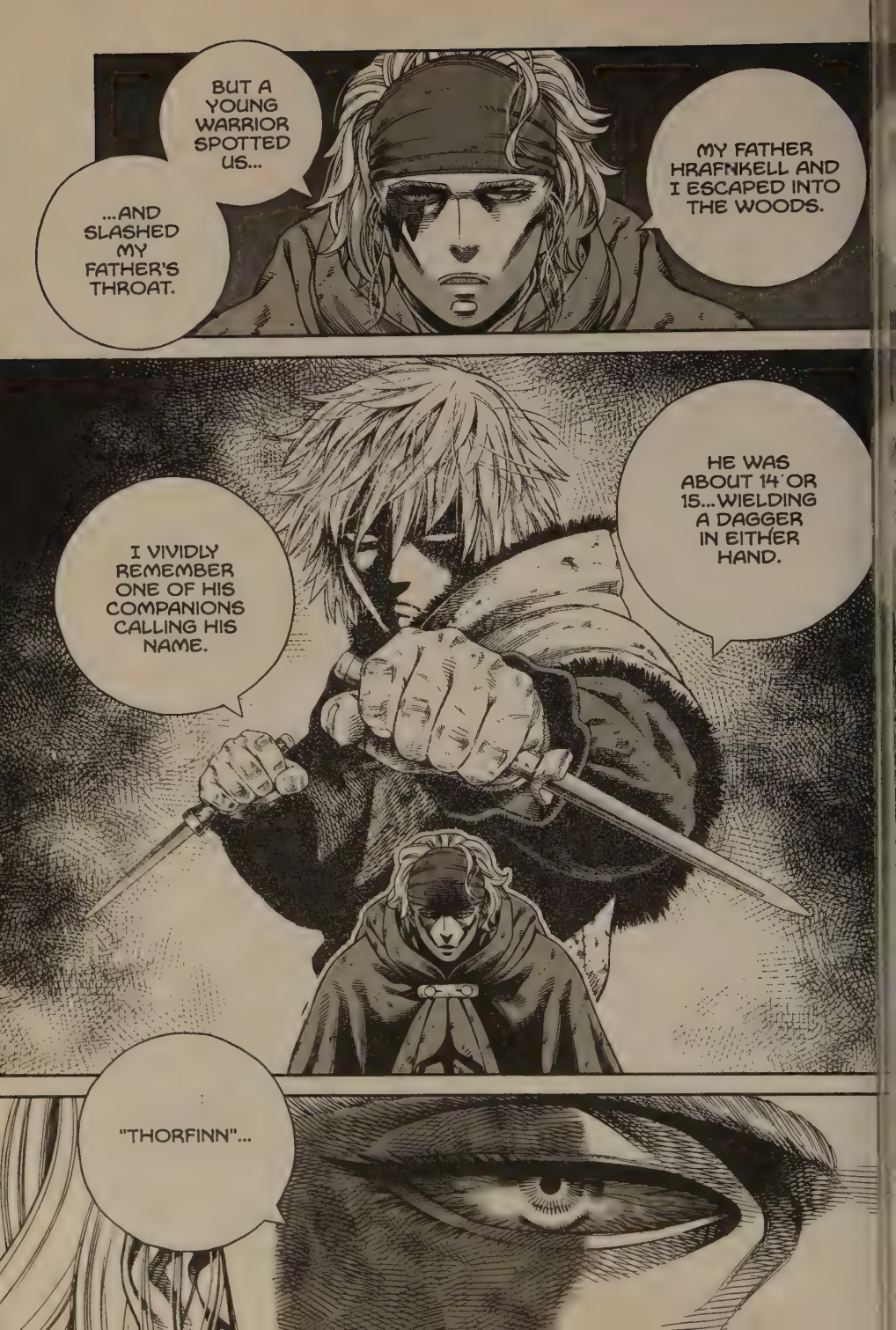

...MY FATHER, MOTHER, AND SISTER WERE KILLED.
EIGHT YEARS AGO...

THAT'S THE MAINLAND FOR YOU! THE FIRST DAY I LAND, AND IT'S ALL BEEN NEW TO ME!
NEVER!
THERE WERE NONE BACK HOME.


...I'VE NEVER HEARD OF A WOMAN SAILOR, EITHER.
HEH...

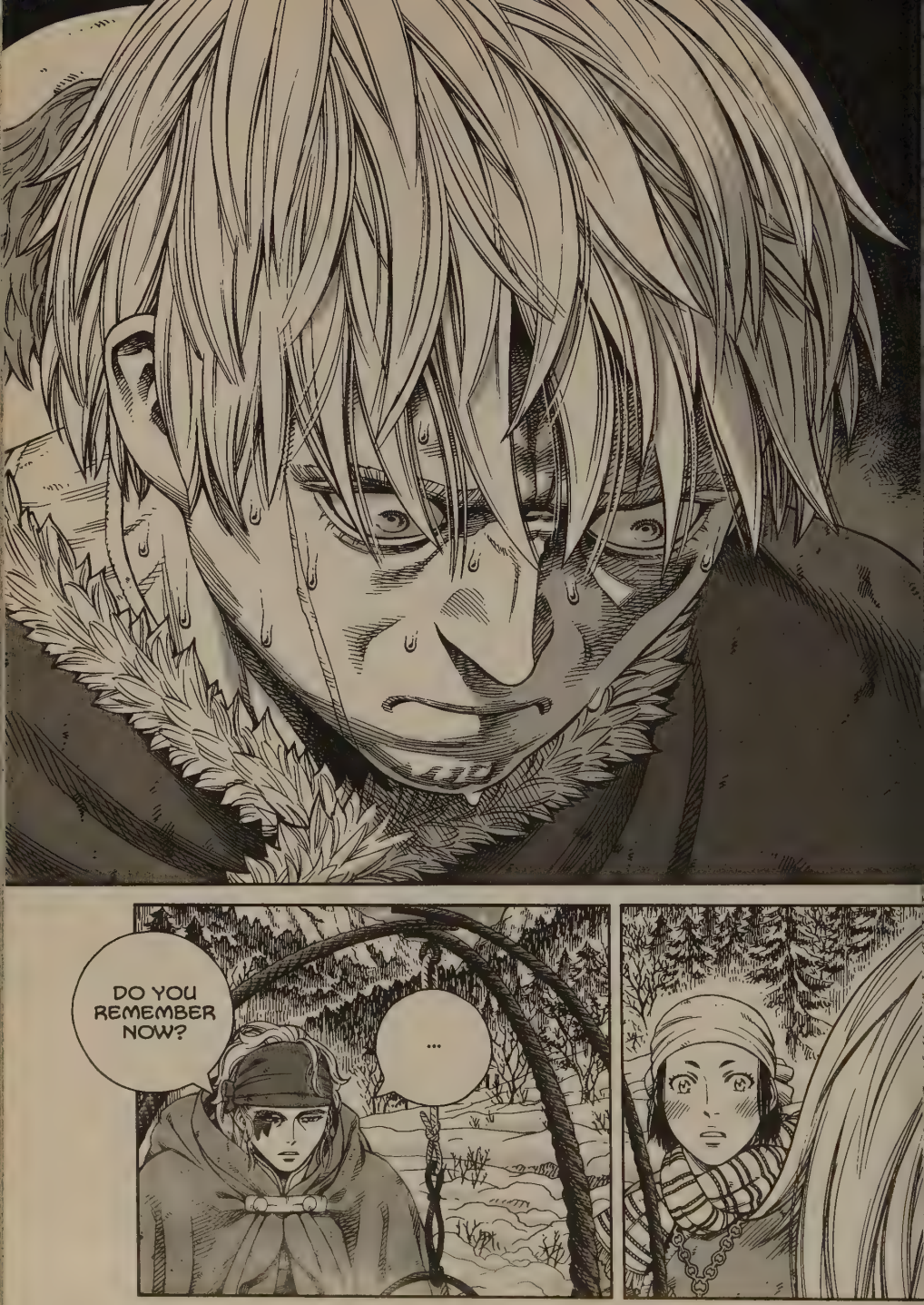
AND THERE IS MY FACE.
MY FAMILY IS DEAD.
I HAVE NO PROPERTY.


WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BE A HUNTER ?
DID YOUR PARENTS OBJECT?
ANG ANGK


MY FATHER HRAFNKELL AND I ESCAPED INTO THE WOODS.
BUT A YOUNG WARRIOR SPOTTED US...
...AND SLASHED MY FATHER'S THROAT.
HE WAS ABOUT 14 OR 15...WIELDING A DAGGER IN EITHER HAND.
I VIVIDLY REMEMBER ONE OF HIS COMPANIONS CALLING HIS NAME.
"THORFINN"...

A BAND OF WARRIORS ATTACKED THE CALM FJORD, SOUTH OF BERGEN.

THEY WERE LESS INTERESTED IN PLUNDER THAN THE SLAUGHTER OF HRAFNKELL, CHIEFTAIN OF THE AREA.

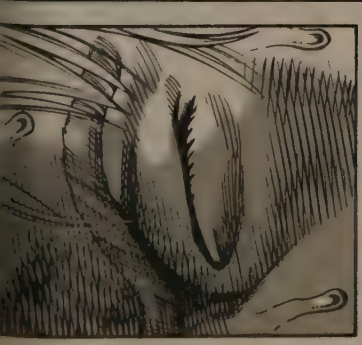

DO YOU REMEMBER NOW?
...

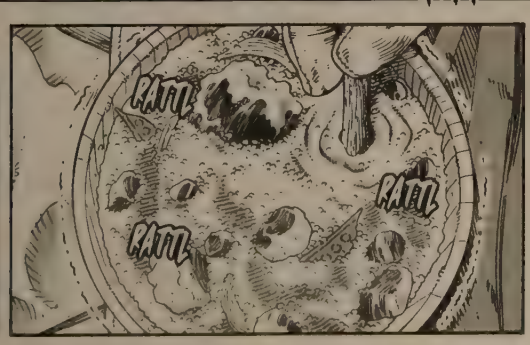
HUH?
I MEAN, THERE'S NO WAY THIS THORFINN COULD BE-
UH...HILD? EVERYONE?
ARE YOU ALL MAKING A MISTAKE?

HAVE NO...
...PROOF OF...
...ANY-THING...
SHE'S RIGHT.
YOU...
WHUP

YOU KILLED MY FATHER.
SO IT WAS YOU.

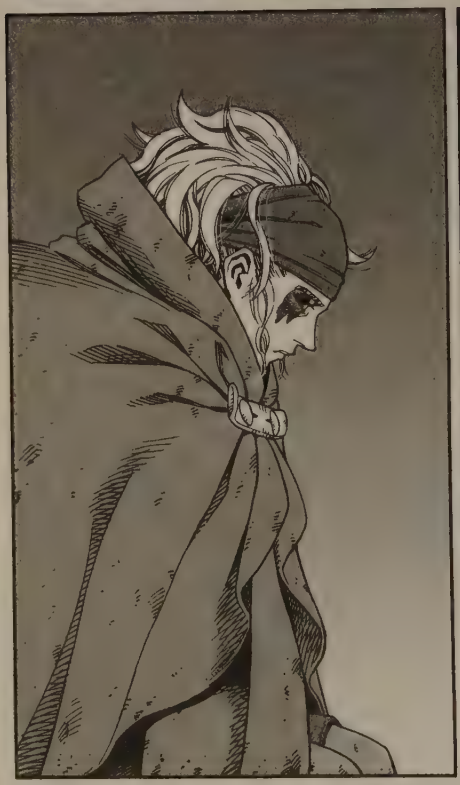
HUFF
HUFF

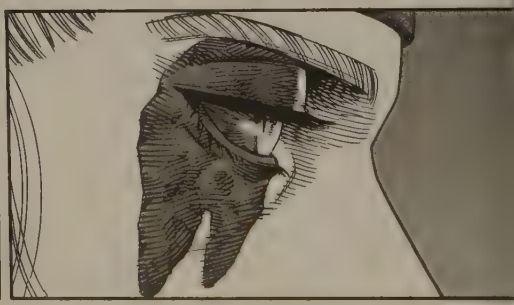


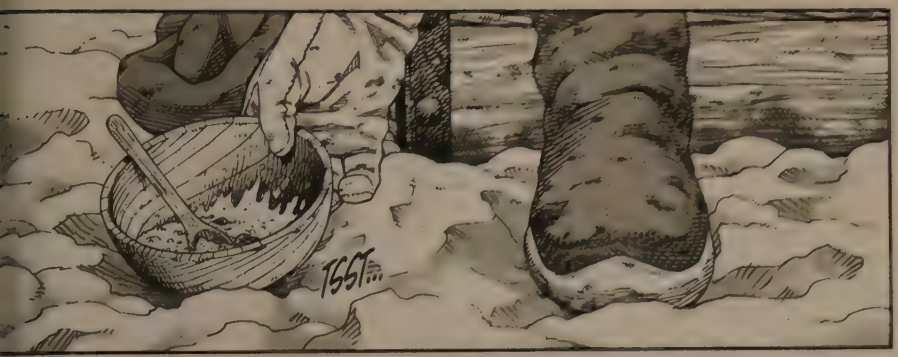

RATTL
RATTL
RATTL

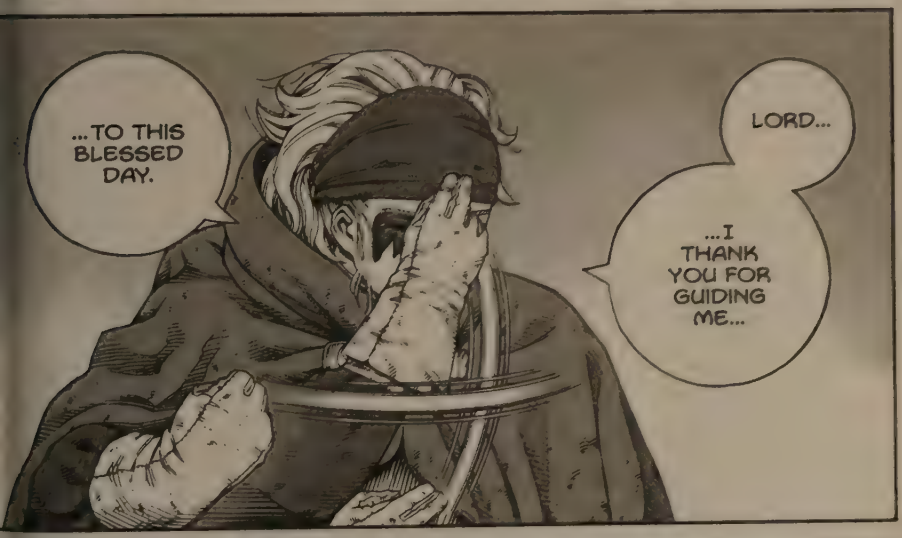
THORFINN...
I REMEM... NOW, I REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE.
YOU WERE THE GIRL... WHO FELL INTO THE SWAMP...
I INTENDED TO MERELY OBSERVE YOUR REACTION.
I DID NOT EXPECT YOU TO SURREN-DER...

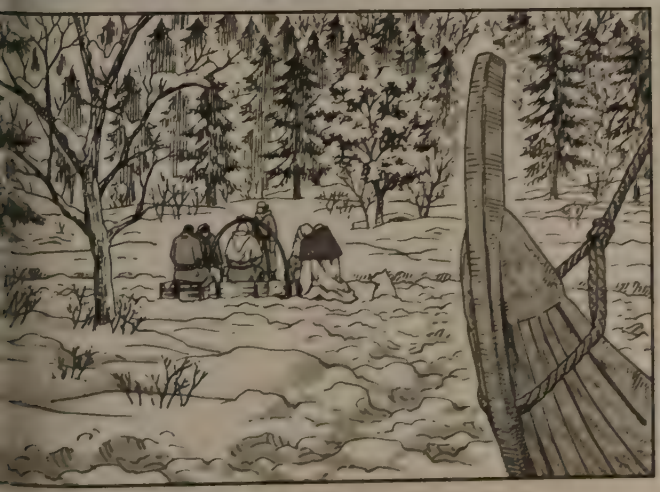
THE MAN...
...WHO KILLED...
...YOUR FATHER WAS...
...ME.



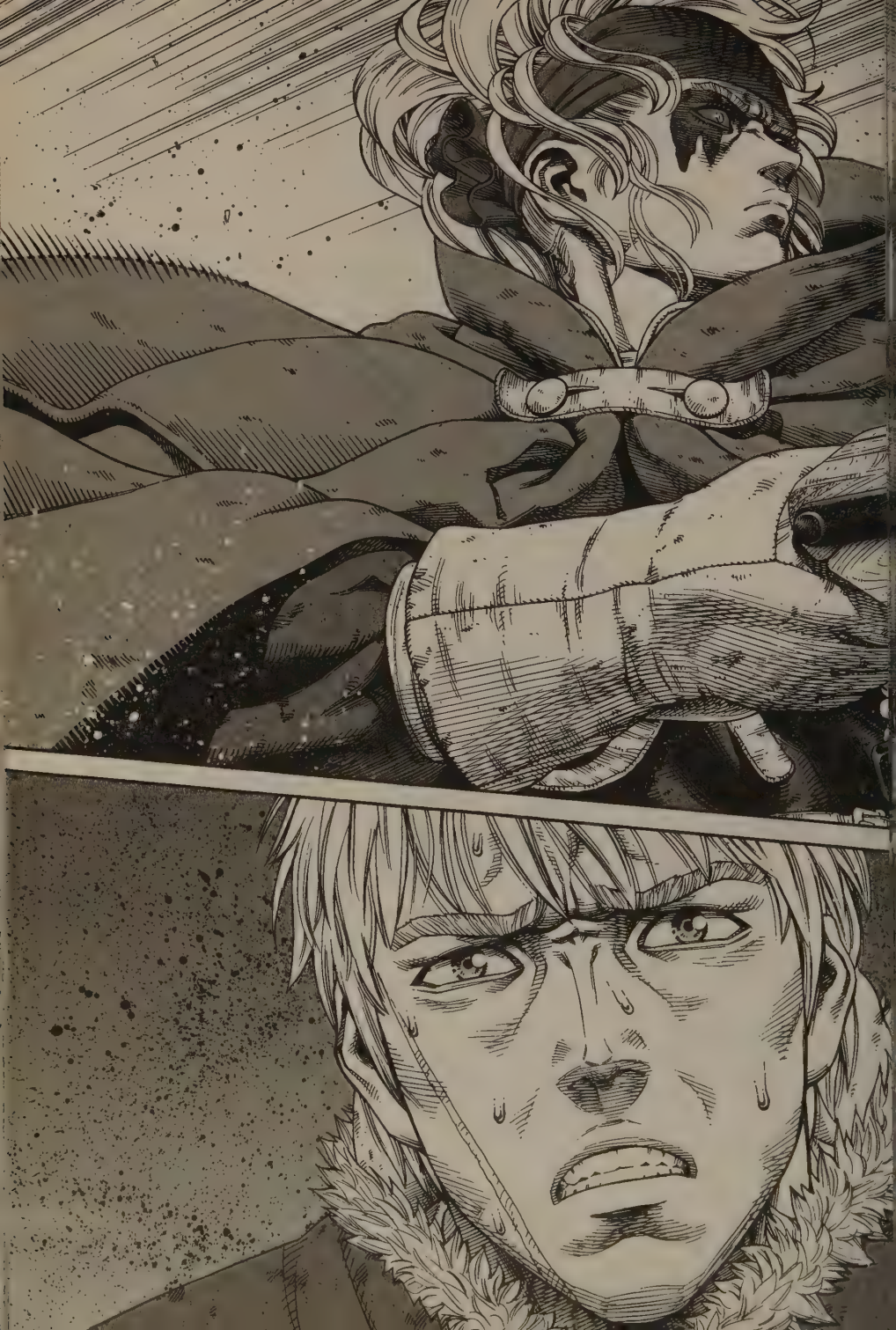



TSST...


...TO THIS BLESSED DAY.
LORD...
...I THANK YOU FOR GUIDING ME...



SNIF



VINLAND SAGA MAP

THORFINN'S TRAVELS

HALFDAN'S FARM

A farm over the mountain from Thorfinn's village. Sigurd set sail in pursuit of Thorfinn half a day later.

SIGURD

Greenland

Arctic Circle

Sea of Norway

Iceland

Norway

Sweden

Bergen

Faroes

Shetland

Jelling

Denmark

North Sea

Brattahlid

York

England

London

Atlantic Ocean

France

GREENLAND

GUDRID

TULLA

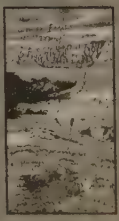
To the west of Iceland lies Greenland, on the south end of which is Brattahlid, home to Leif's farm. Gudrid went from this harsh location to Iceland in order to be married.

SHETLAND ISLANDS

The home of Arngrim, Leif's friend. Their settlement was burned to the ground, leaving only Karli alive.

KARLI

DOG



SOUTH OF BERGEN

The site of the Calm Fjord, the place led by Hild's father, Krafnkell.

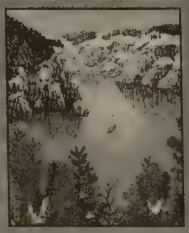
HILD

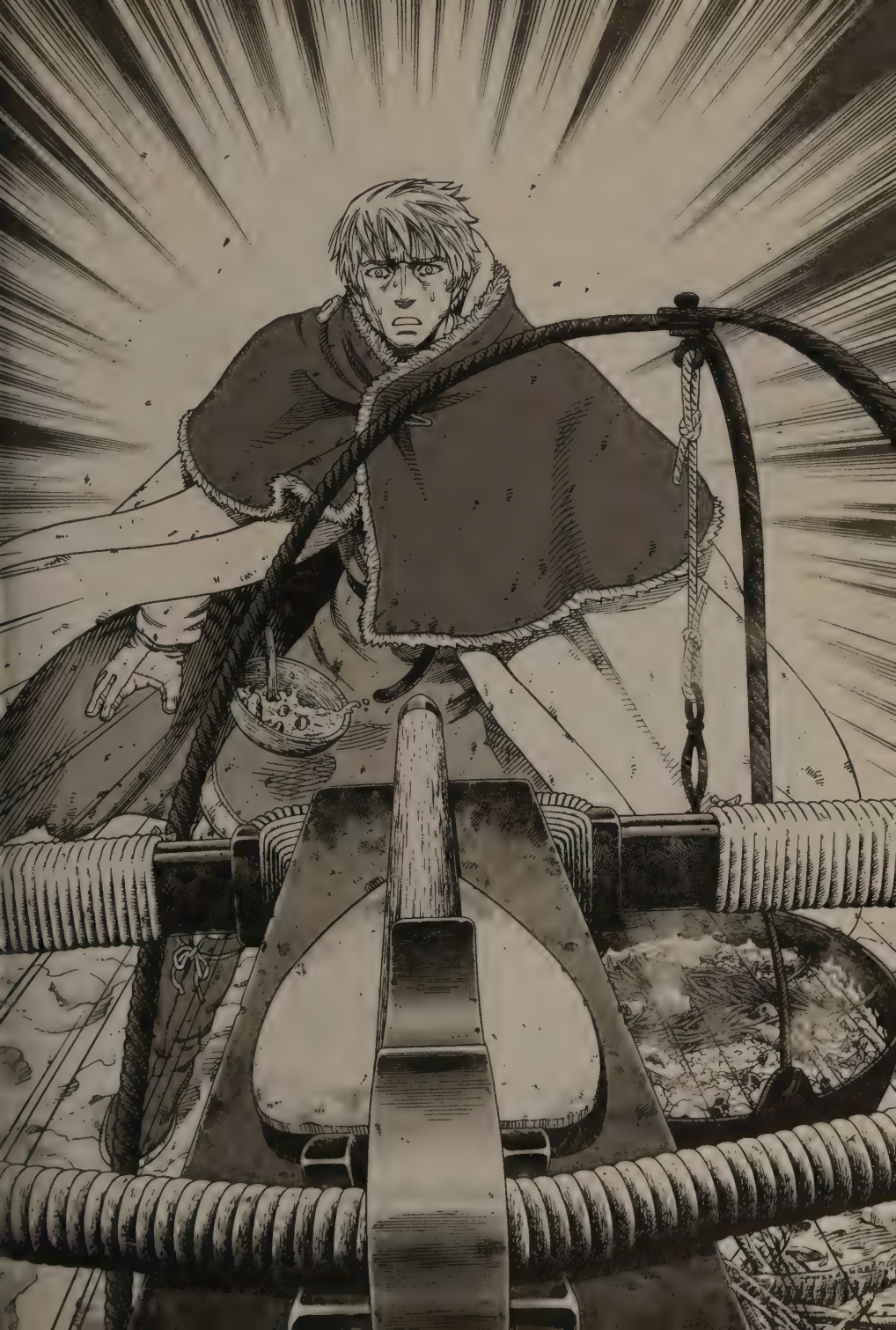
THORFINN

EINAR

BUG-EYED THORFINN

LEIF





Translation Notes

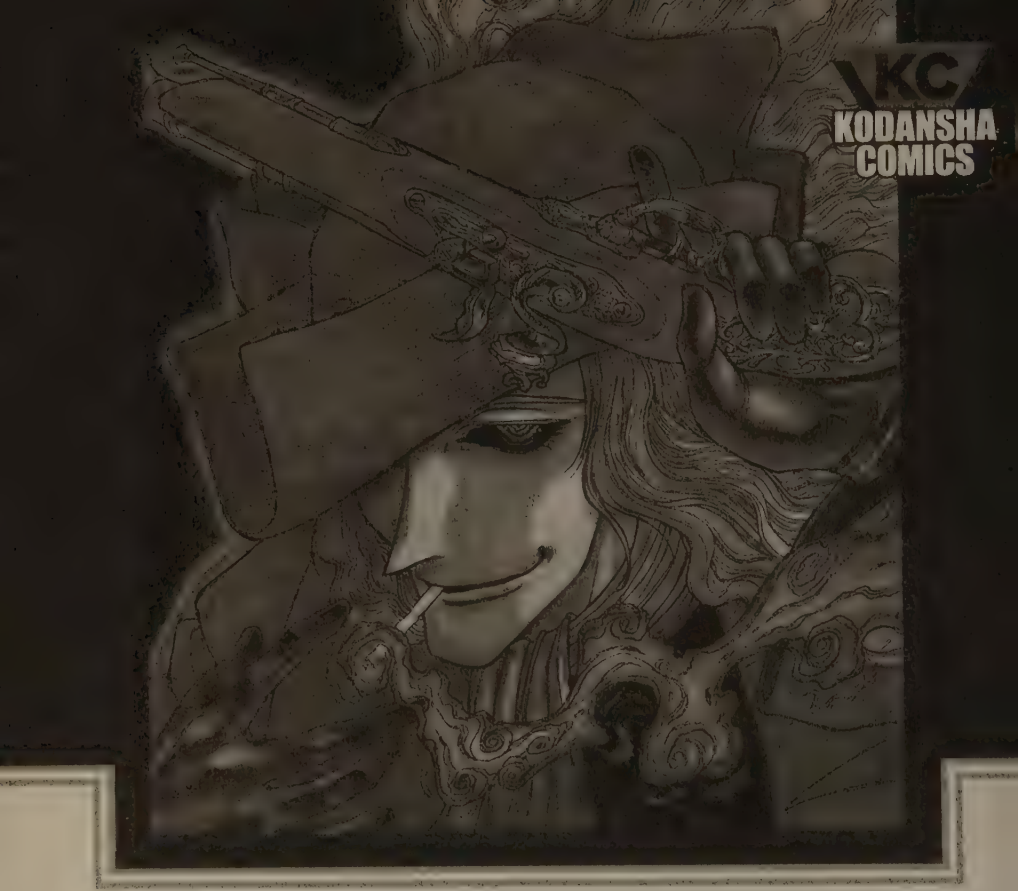
Bóndi, page 96

The middle class of Norse society, made up largely of farmers and other free landowners. As an interesting aside, another form of the word, *húsbóndi*, meaning "house holder," is the source of the English word husband.

When a bear's muscle and skeletal structure is exposed after being skinned, I feel like it is remarkably human for a quadruped. Especially the legs. There are five fingers with palms and soles that lay flush against the ground, not like cows or horses that stand on their hooves. So it's a build that allows it to stand up on its hind legs and grab things. The Ainu of Japan worshipped the brown bear as a god. They thought that its pelt could be removed at will, and when the brown bear "undressed" in the realm of the gods, it took the form of a human. Some North American natives held similar beliefs. They maintained that a human could become a goat if they wore a pelt in the habitat of wild goats, and could mate and have children with a goat in that state. By thinking of an animal as "the same as human," it breeds respect and gratitude. We might be the hunter and they may be the hunted, but the Ainu and Native Americans felt gratitude for their prey, and were careful not to overhunt them. Their prey were gods bearing blessings, and treasured neighbors. Perhaps it's because they had the firsthand experience of killing their prey, skinning it, and preparing the meat. I've eaten bear meat before, though I didn't cut it up myself. Before I did, they warned me that it wasn't very good, but I thought it was quite tasty. It goes well with miso. Thank you, bear.

MAKOTO YUKIMURA

VINLAND SAGA



We are pleased to present you with a preview…

The Black Museum: The Ghost and the Lady

By Kazuhiro Fujita

Deep in London's Scotland Yard sits an evidence room dedicated to the greatest mysteries of British history. In this "Black Museum" sits a misshapen hunk of lead–two bullets fused together–the key to the untold story of a wartime encounter between Florence Nightingale, the mother of modern nursing, and a supernatural Man in Grey. The record books show Florence fought for compassion as empires' petty rivalries threatened to destroy the hopes and lives of common people. But a guest in the Black Museum knows the truth is not so simple, and the famed Lady with the Lamp had a ghastly secret…

Now on sale!

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MR. HALL, I PRE-SUME?

YOU WISH TO TOUR THE BLACK MUSEUM, DO YOU NOT?

I AM THE CURATOR.

JUST SO, SIR.

PLEASE MIND YOUR STEP...

WHISPERS SAY YOU HOLD PIECES OF EVIDENCE FROM ALL INVESTI-GATIONS IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

INDEED... TO THINK THAT SUCH A PLACE WOULD BE HIDDEN IN THE BOWELS OF SCOTLAND YARD...

IT IS RATH-ER HOT. JUST AS EXPECTED FOR AUGUST.

CREAK CREAK

KA-CHACK

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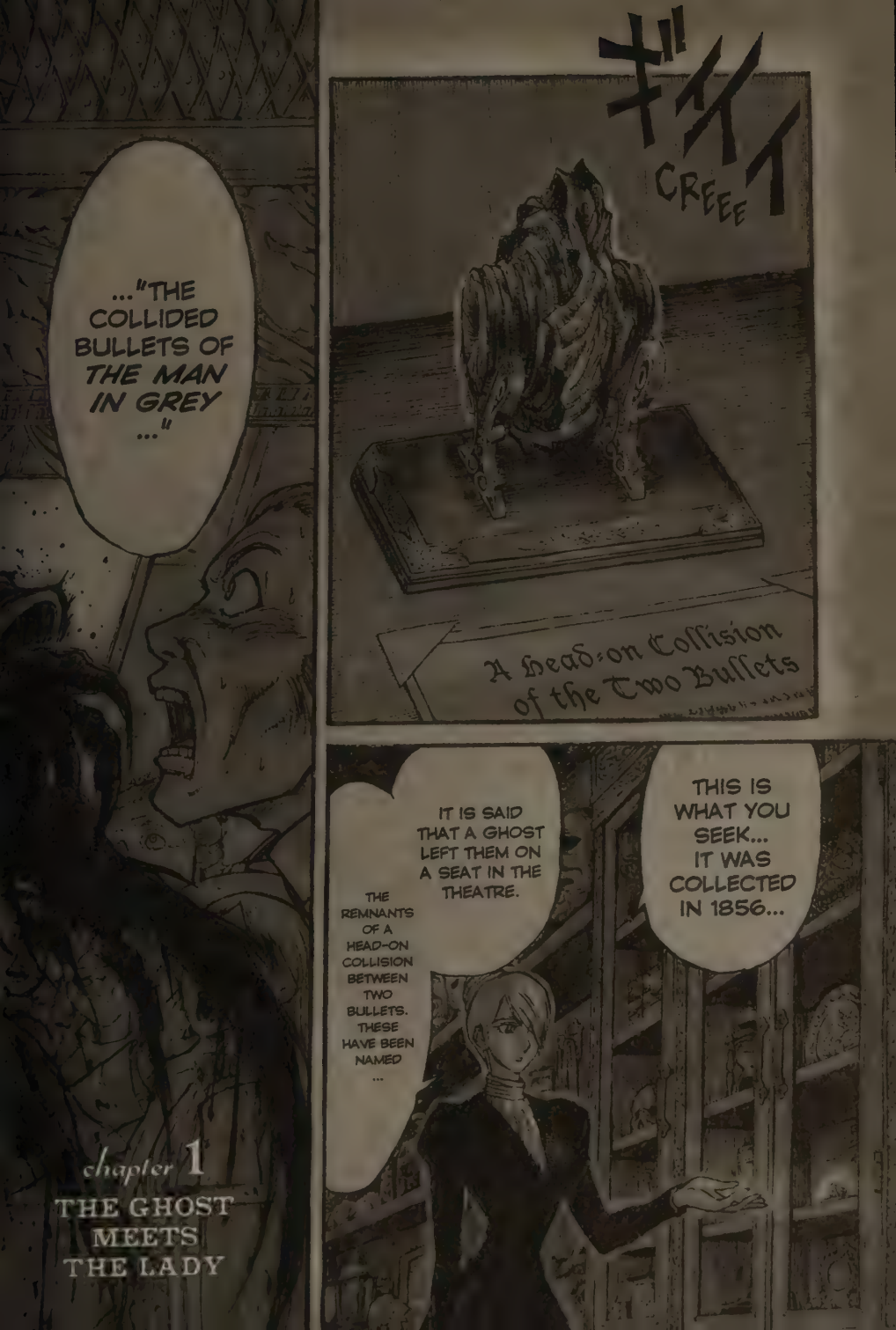
The Black Museum

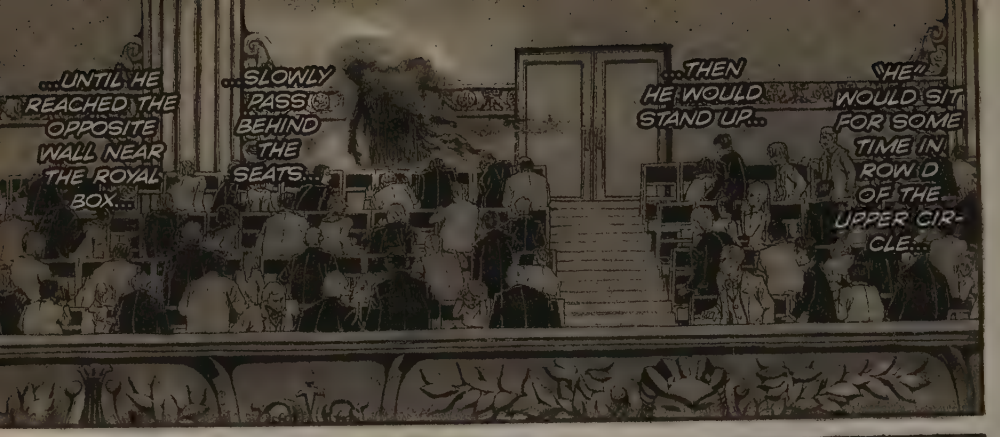
The Ghost and the Lady

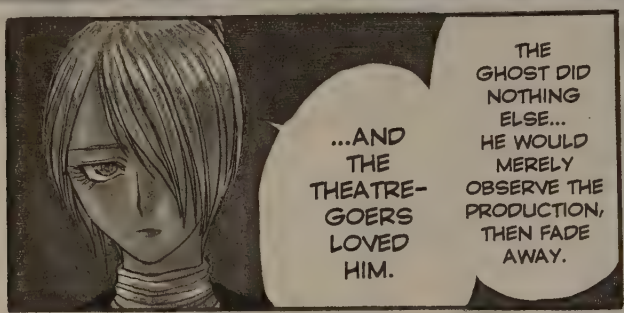
1

Kazuhiro Fujita

The Black Museum
The Ghost and the Lady
1
Kazuhiro Fujita

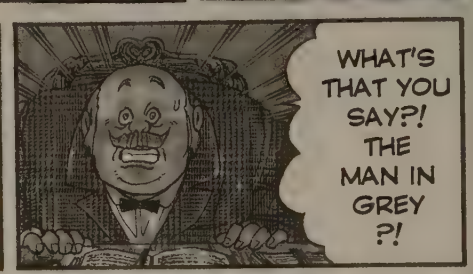

...“THE COLLIDED BULLETS OF *THE MAN IN GREY* ...”
キィイイ
CREEEE
A Head-on Collision of the Two Bullets
THIS IS WHAT YOU SEEK... IT WAS COLLECTED IN 1856...
IT IS SAID THAT A GHOST LEFT THEM ON A SEAT IN THE THEATRE.
THE REMNANTS OF A HEAD-ON COLLISION BETWEEN TWO BULLETS. THESE HAVE BEEN NAMED ...
chapter 1
THE GHOST MEETS THE LADY

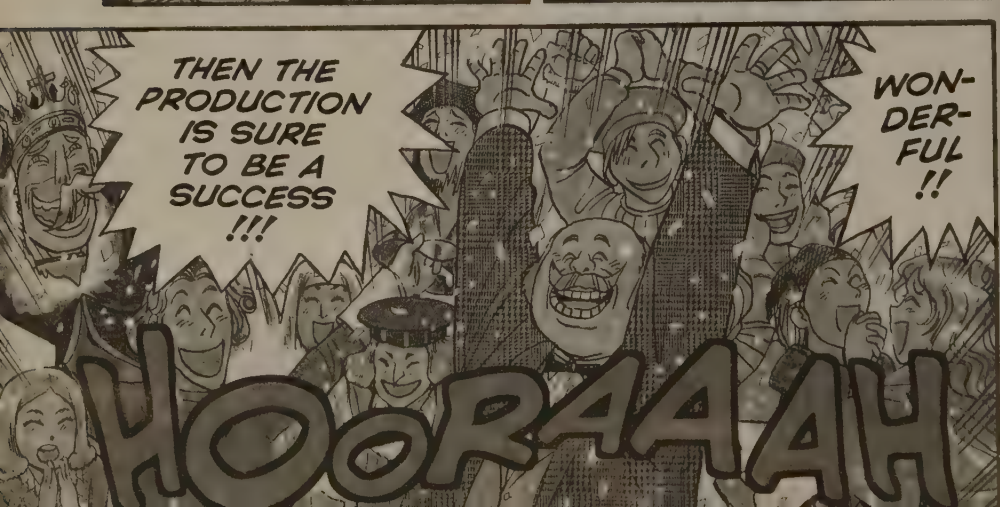

...UNTIL HE REACHED THE OPPOSITE WALL NEAR THE ROYAL BOX...
...SLOWLY PASS BEHIND THE SEATS...
...THEN HE WOULD STAND UP...
"HE" WOULD SIT FOR SOME TIME IN ROW D OF THE UPPER CIRCLE...

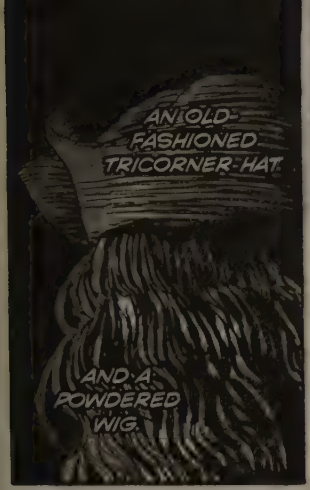

...AND THE THEATRE-GOERS LOVED HIM.
THE GHOST DID NOTHING ELSE... HE WOULD MERELY OBSERVE THE PRODUCTION, THEN FADE AWAY.

...AND DISAPPEAR.

HE SHOWED HIM-SELF ?!

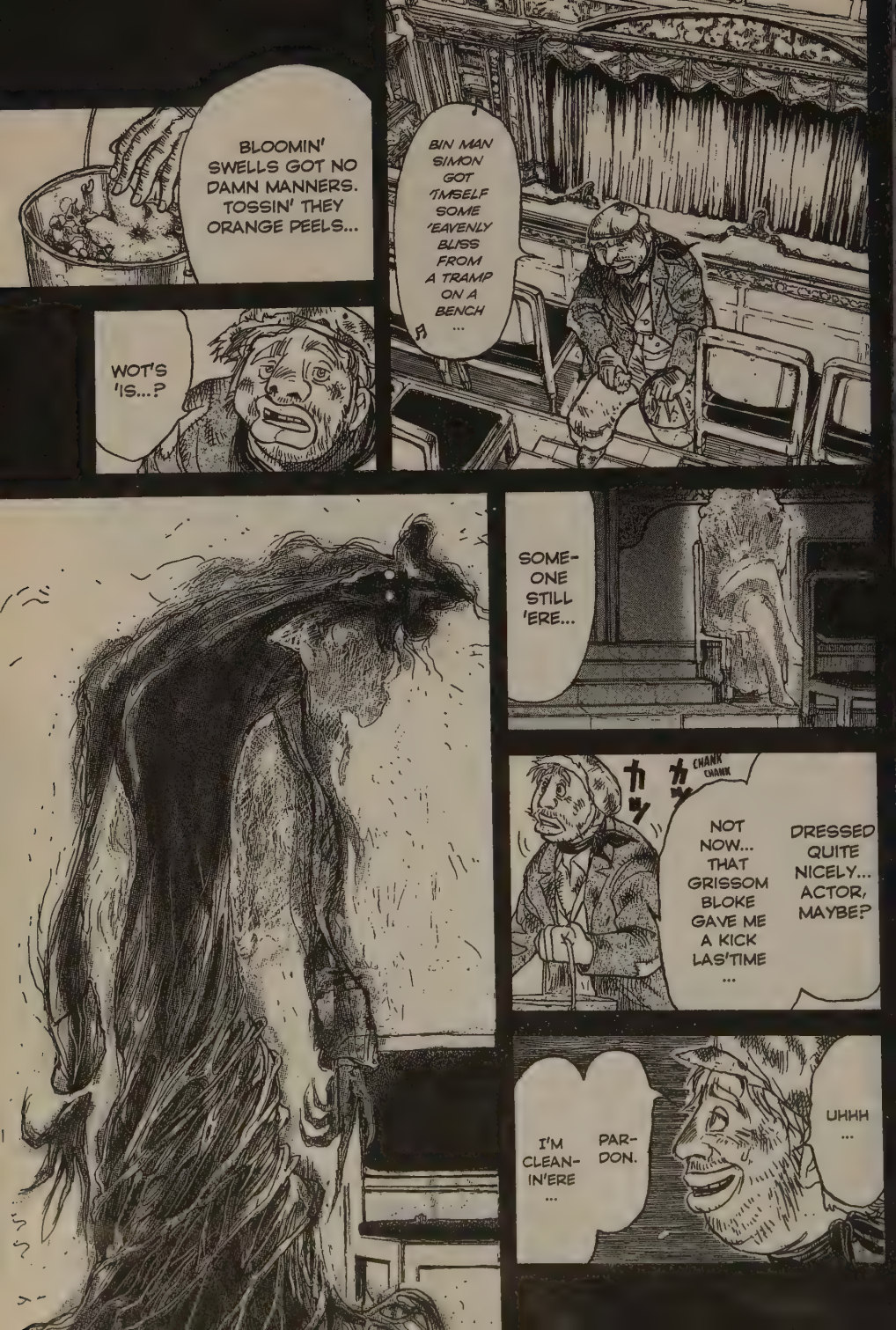

WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY?! THE MAN IN GREY ?!

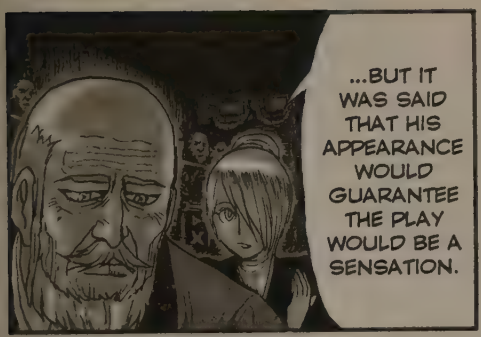

THEN THE PRODUCTION IS SURE TO BE A SUCCESS !!!
WON-DER-FUL !!
HOORAAAH

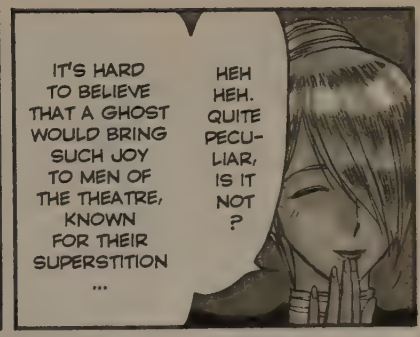


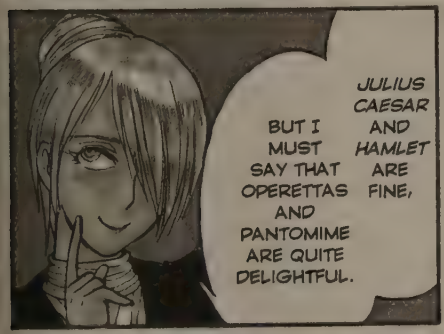
...AND OFTEN MADE HIS APPEARANCE DURING MATINEES.

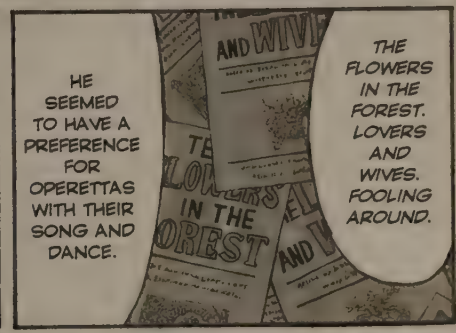
THE MAN IN GREY HAUNTED THE THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE...


BLOOMIN' SWELLS GOT NO DAMN MANNERS. TOSSIN' THEY ORANGE PEELS...
WOT'S 'IS...?
BIN MAN SIMON GOT 'IMSELF SOME 'EAVENLY BLISS FROM A TRAMP ON A BENCH ...
SOME-ONE STILL 'ERE...
カツ
カツ
CHANK CHANK
NOT NOW... THAT GRISSOM BLOKE GAVE ME A KICK LAS'TIME ...
DRESSED QUITE NICELY... ACTOR, MAYBE?
I'M CLEAN-IN'ERE ...
PAR-DON.
UHHH ...

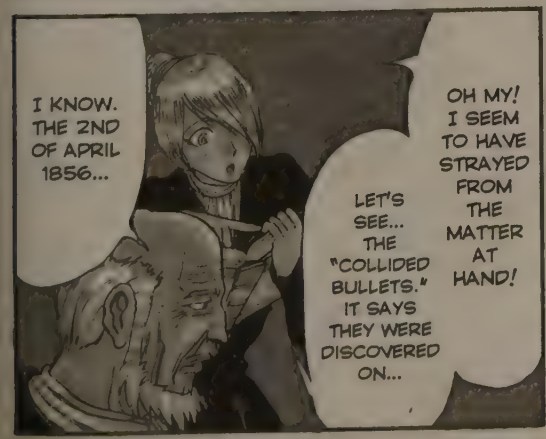

...BUT IT WAS SAID THAT HIS APPEARANCE WOULD GUARANTEE THE PLAY WOULD BE A SENSATION.

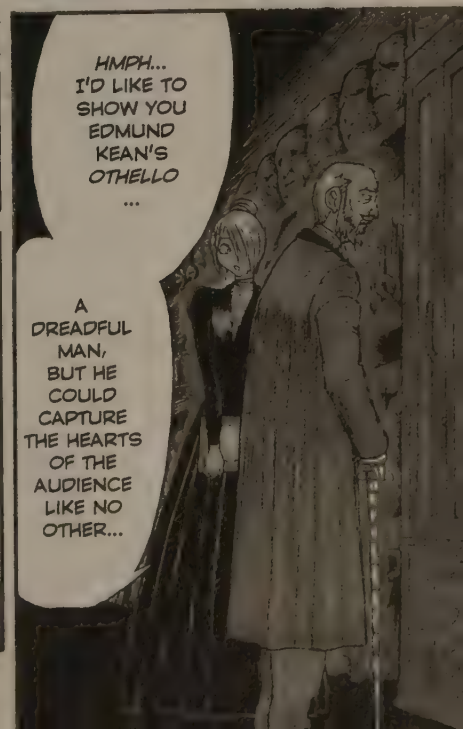

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT A GHOST WOULD BRING SUCH JOY TO MEN OF THE THEATRE, KNOWN FOR THEIR SUPERSTITION ...
HEH HEH. QUITE PECULIAR, IS IT NOT ?

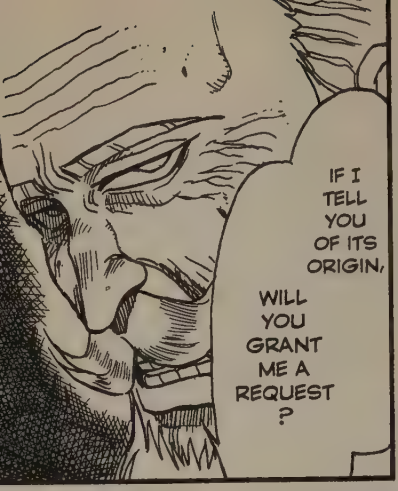

BUT I MUST SAY THAT OPERETTAS AND PANTOMIME ARE QUITE DELIGHTFUL.
JULIUS CAESAR AND HAMLET ARE FINE,

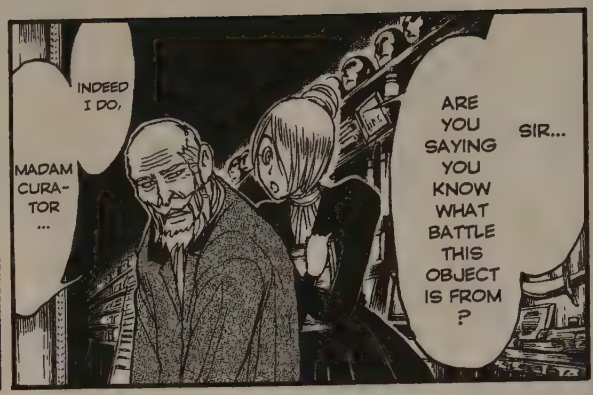

HE SEEMED TO HAVE A PREFERENCE FOR OPERETTAS WITH THEIR SONG AND DANCE.
THE FLOWERS IN THE FOREST. LOVERS AND WIVES. FOOLING AROUND.

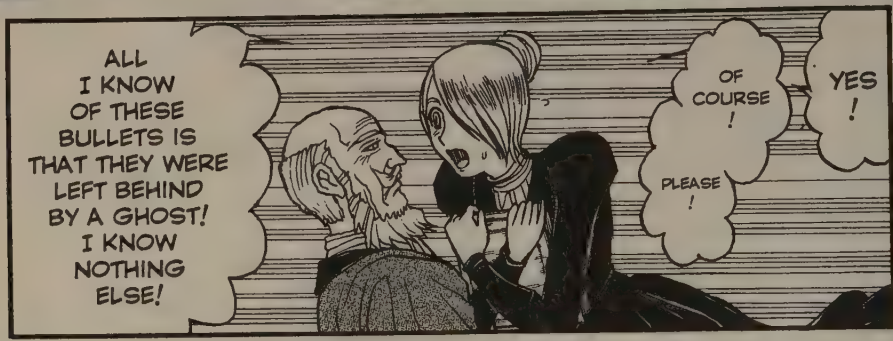
...YES, QUITE OFTEN...
DO YOU ATTEND THE THEATRE, SIR?

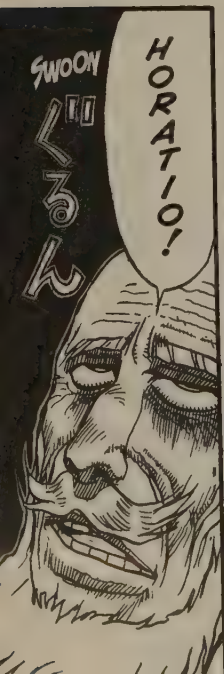

I KNOW. THE 2ND OF APRIL 1856...
LET'S SEE... THE "COLLIDED BULLETS." IT SAYS THEY WERE DISCOVERED ON...
OH MY! I SEEM TO HAVE STRAYED FROM THE MATTER AT HAND!

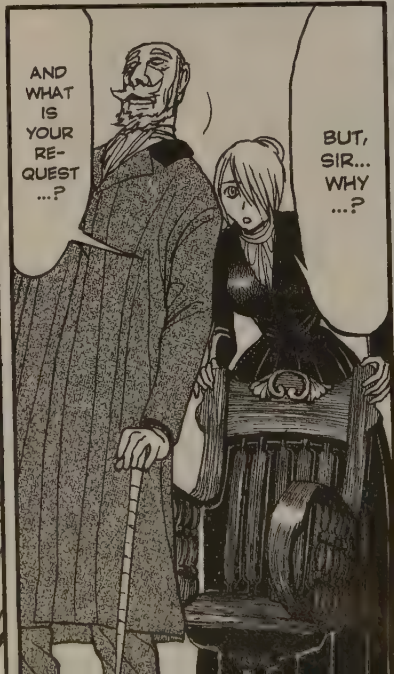

HMPH... I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU EDMUND KEAN'S OTHELLO ...
A DREADFUL MAN, BUT HE COULD CAPTURE THE HEARTS OF THE AUDIENCE LIKE NO OTHER...

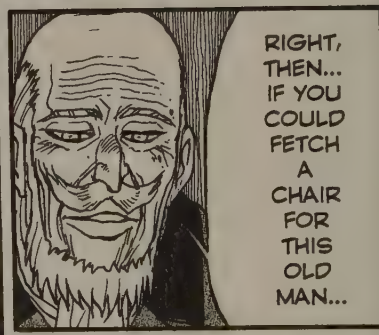

IF I TELL YOU OF ITS ORIGIN,
WILL YOU GRANT ME A REQUEST ?

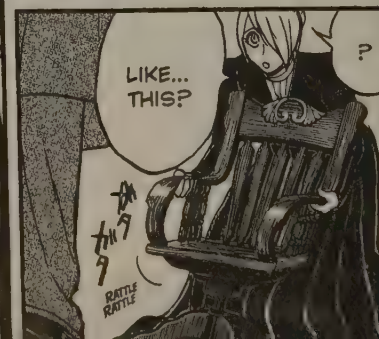

ARE YOU SAYING YOU KNOW WHAT BATTLE THIS OBJECT IS FROM ?
SIR...
INDEED I DO,
MADAM CURA-TOR ...

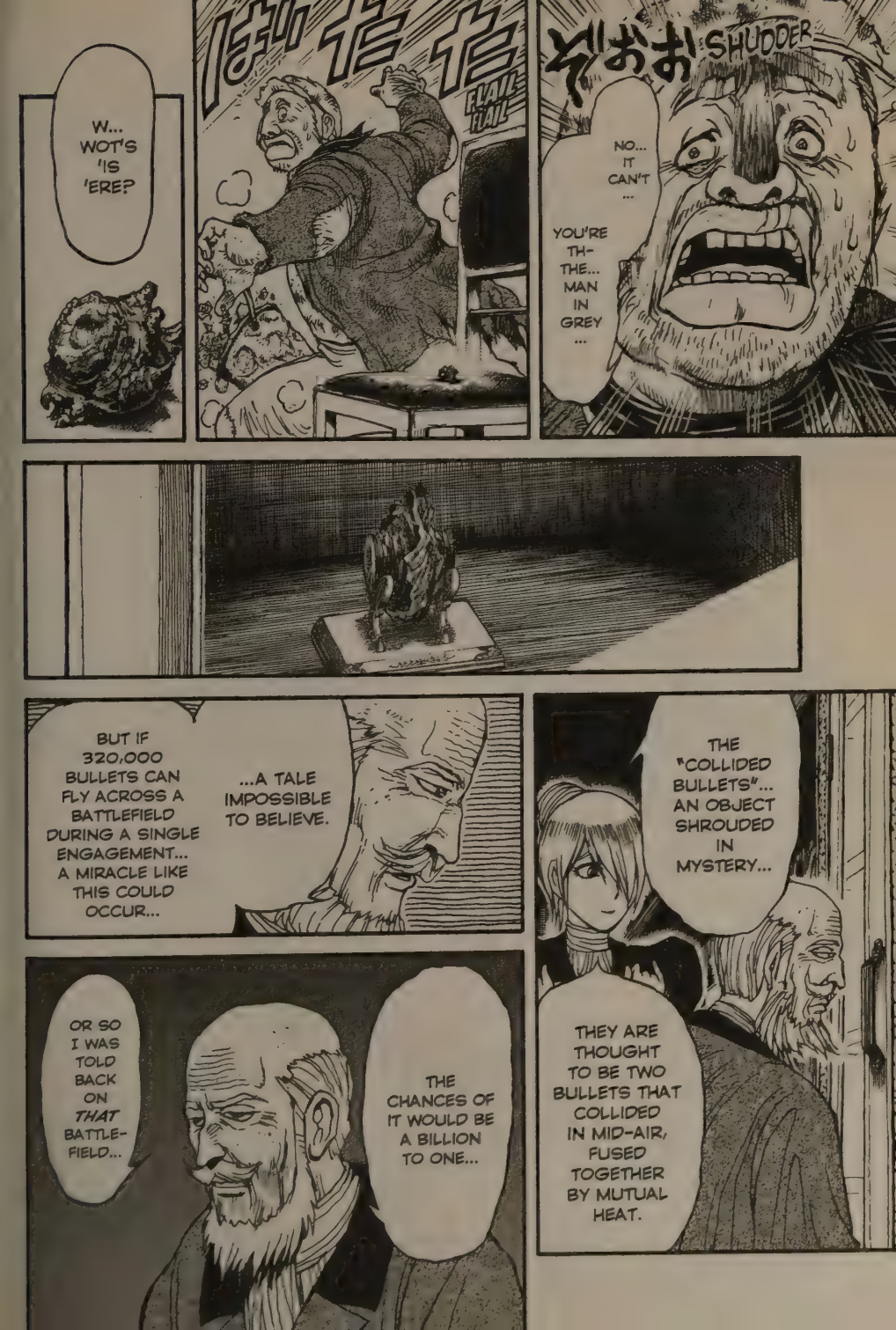

YES !
OF COURSE !
PLEASE !
ALL I KNOW OF THESE BULLETS IS THAT THEY WERE LEFT BEHIND BY A GHOST! I KNOW NOTHING ELSE!

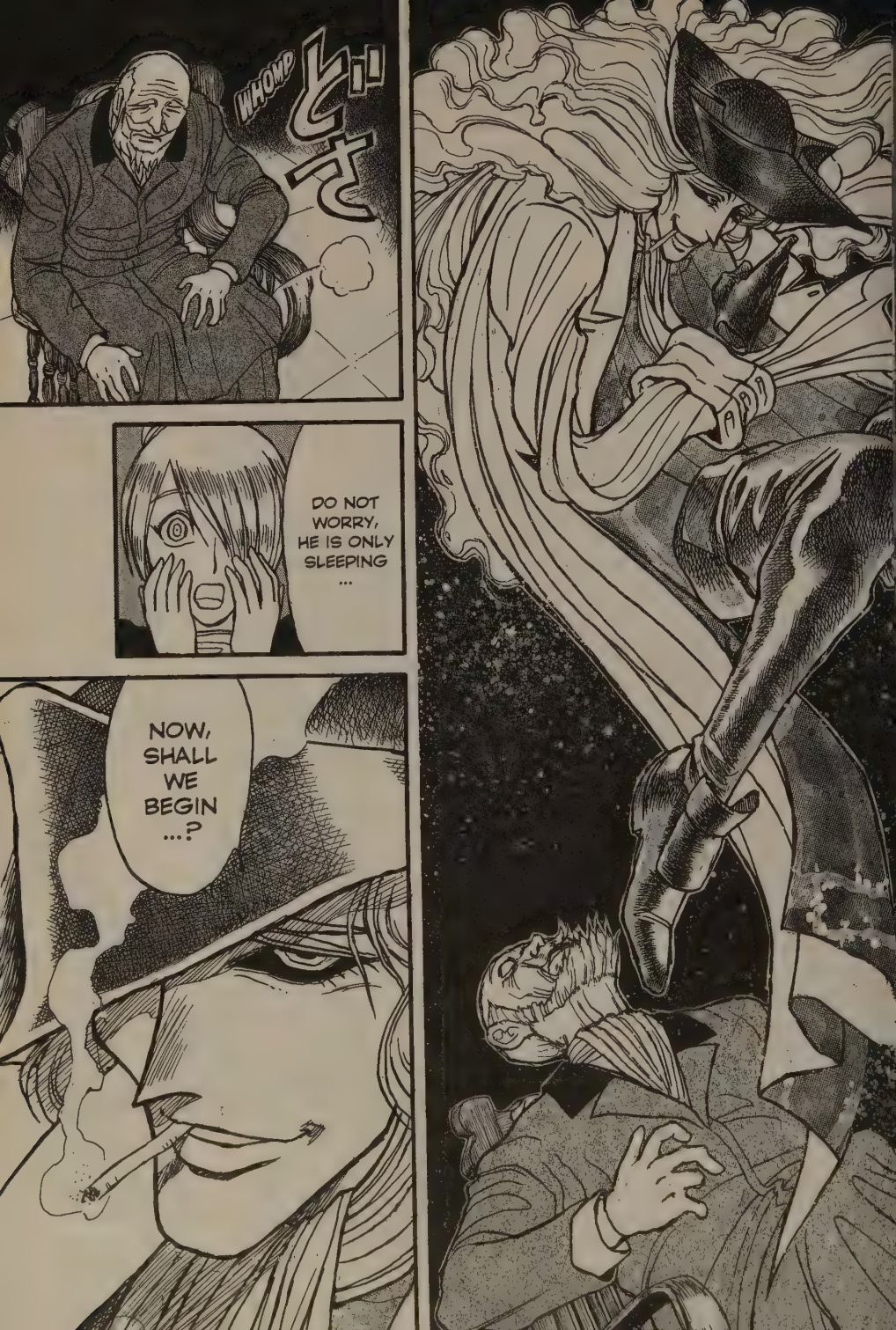

SWOON
くるん
HORATIO!

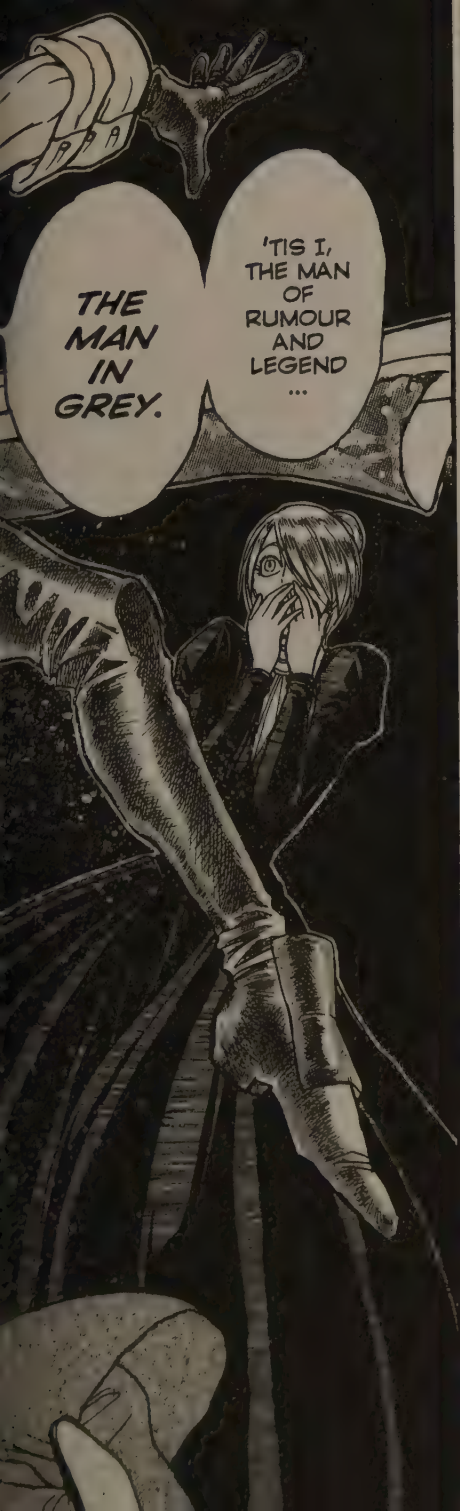

BUT, SIR... WHY ...?
AND WHAT IS YOUR RE-QUEST ...?

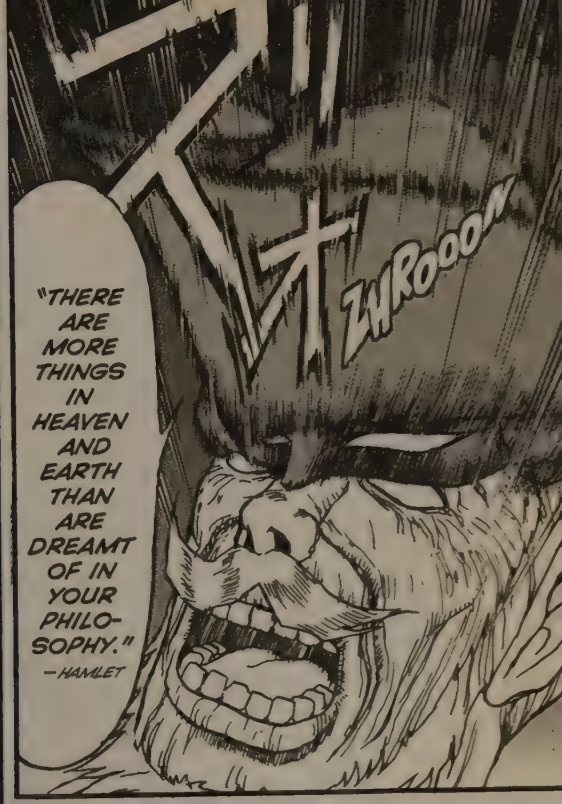

RIGHT, THEN... IF YOU COULD FETCH A CHAIR FOR THIS OLD MAN...

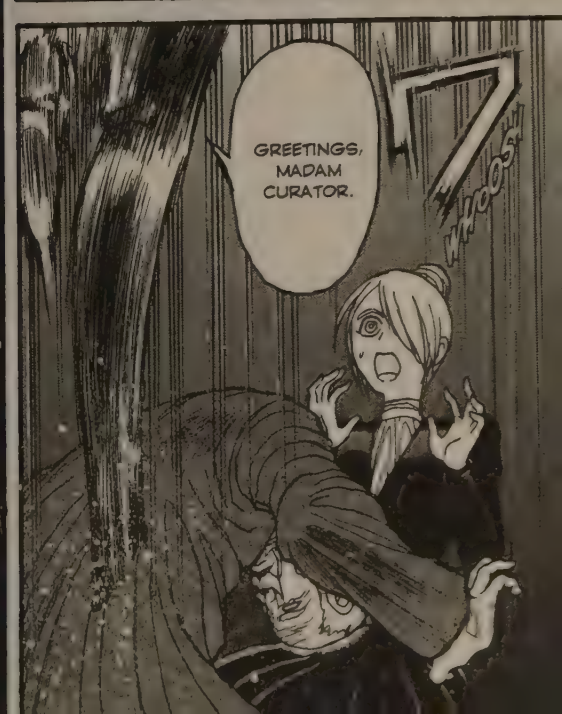

?
LIKE... THIS?
カタカタ
RATTLE RATTLE

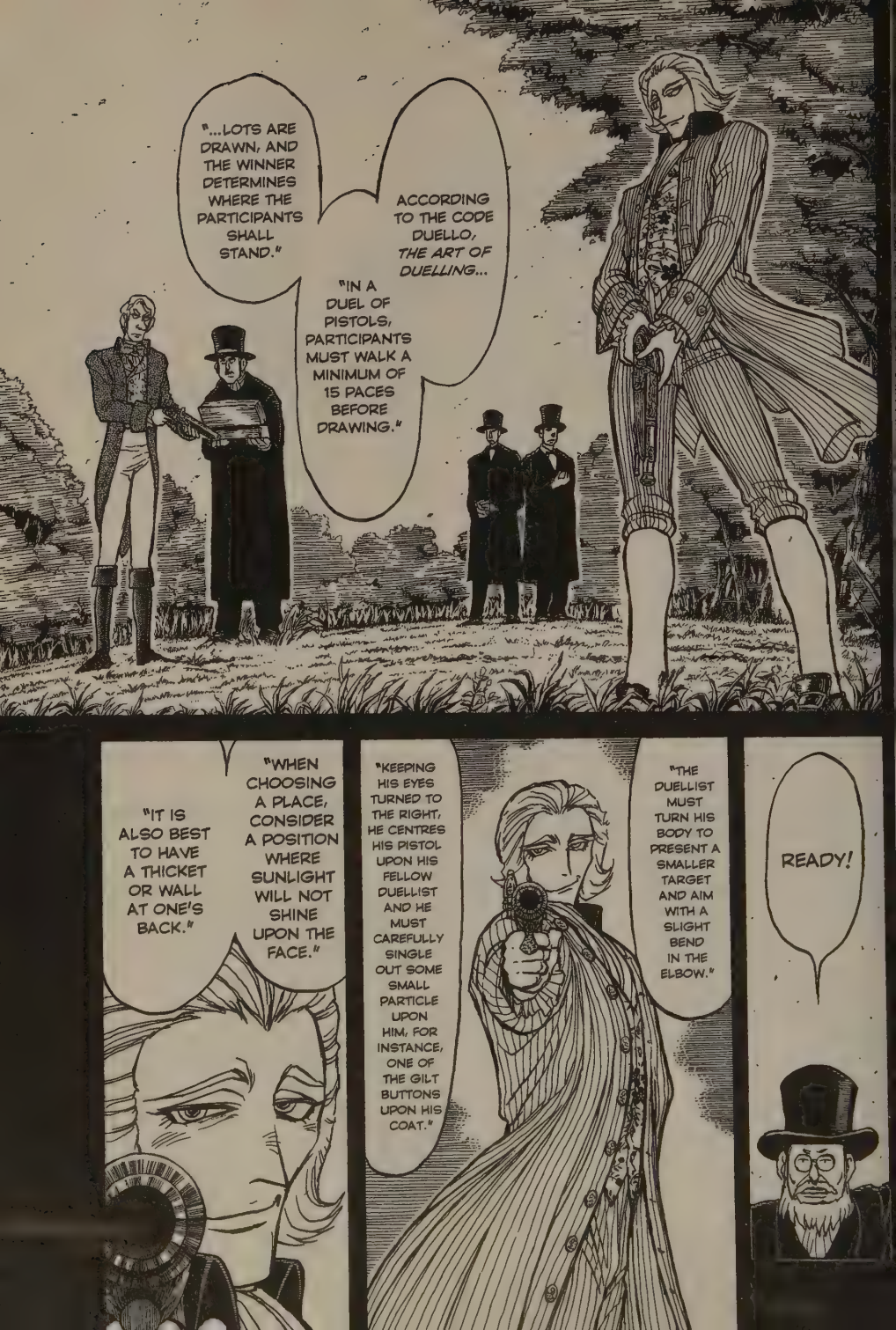

W... WOT'S 'IS 'ERE?
FLAIL FLAIL
SHUDDER
NO... IT CAN'T ...
YOU'RE TH-THE... MAN IN GREY ...
BUT IF 320,000 BULLETS CAN FLY ACROSS A BATTLEFIELD DURING A SINGLE ENGAGEMENT... A MIRACLE LIKE THIS COULD OCCUR...
...A TALE IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE.
THE "COLLIDED BULLETS"... AN OBJECT SHROUDED IN MYSTERY...
THEY ARE THOUGHT TO BE TWO BULLETS THAT COLLIDED IN MID-AIR, FUSED TOGETHER BY MUTUAL HEAT.
OR SO I WAS TOLD BACK ON *THAT* BATTLE-FIELD...
THE CHANCES OF IT WOULD BE A BILLION TO ONE...


WHOMP
DO NOT WORRY, HE IS ONLY SLEEPING ...
NOW, SHALL WE BEGIN ...?

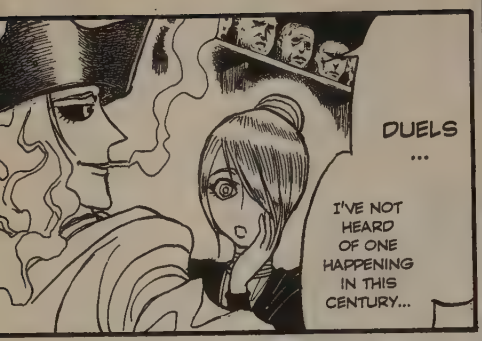

THE MAN IN GREY.
'TIS I, THE MAN OF RUMOUR AND LEGEND ...


"THERE ARE MORE THINGS IN HEAVEN AND EARTH THAN ARE DREAMT OF IN YOUR PHILO-SOPHY."
—HAMLET
ZHROOOM

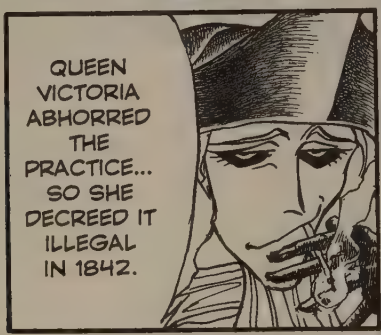

GREETINGS, MADAM CURATOR.
WHOOSH

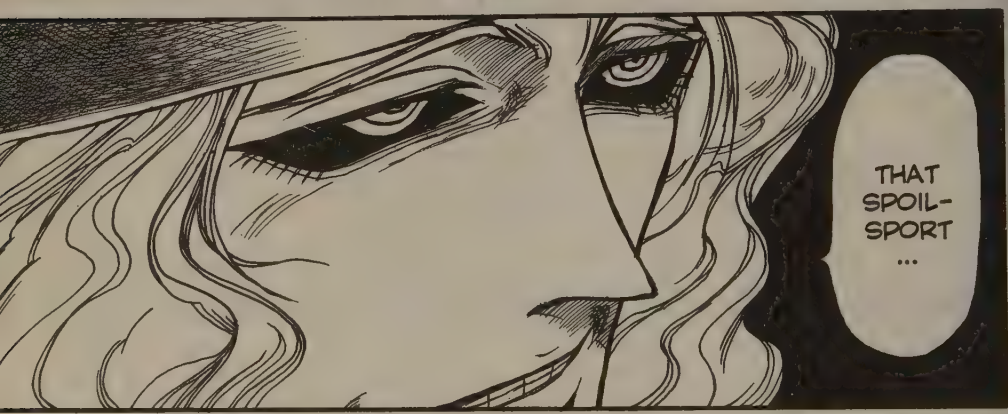

"...LOTS ARE DRAWN, AND THE WINNER DETERMINES WHERE THE PARTICIPANTS SHALL STAND."
ACCORDING TO THE CODE DUELLO, *THE ART OF DUELLING*...
"IN A DUEL OF PISTOLS, PARTICIPANTS MUST WALK A MINIMUM OF 15 PACES BEFORE DRAWING."
"IT IS ALSO BEST TO HAVE A THICKET OR WALL AT ONE'S BACK."
"WHEN CHOOSING A PLACE, CONSIDER A POSITION WHERE SUNLIGHT WILL NOT SHINE UPON THE FACE."
"KEEPING HIS EYES TURNED TO THE RIGHT, HE CENTRES HIS PISTOL UPON HIS FELLOW DUELLIST AND HE MUST CAREFULLY SINGLE OUT SOME SMALL PARTICLE UPON HIM, FOR INSTANCE, ONE OF THE GILT BUTTONS UPON HIS COAT."
"THE DUELLIST MUST TURN HIS BODY TO PRESENT A SMALLER TARGET AND AIM WITH A SLIGHT BEND IN THE ELBOW."
READY!

HEEEEEE!!
HI!
...
HEY NOW...
...HE'S ONLY A GHOST!!
GRIP
COMPOSE YOURSELF!! YOU CURATE THE BLACK MUSEUM! YOU CAN'T LOSE YOUR WITS OVER THIS...
VERY WELL, LET'S START WITH YOUR STORY...
HEH HEH ...
ヒョオオオ
WHOOOOOSH

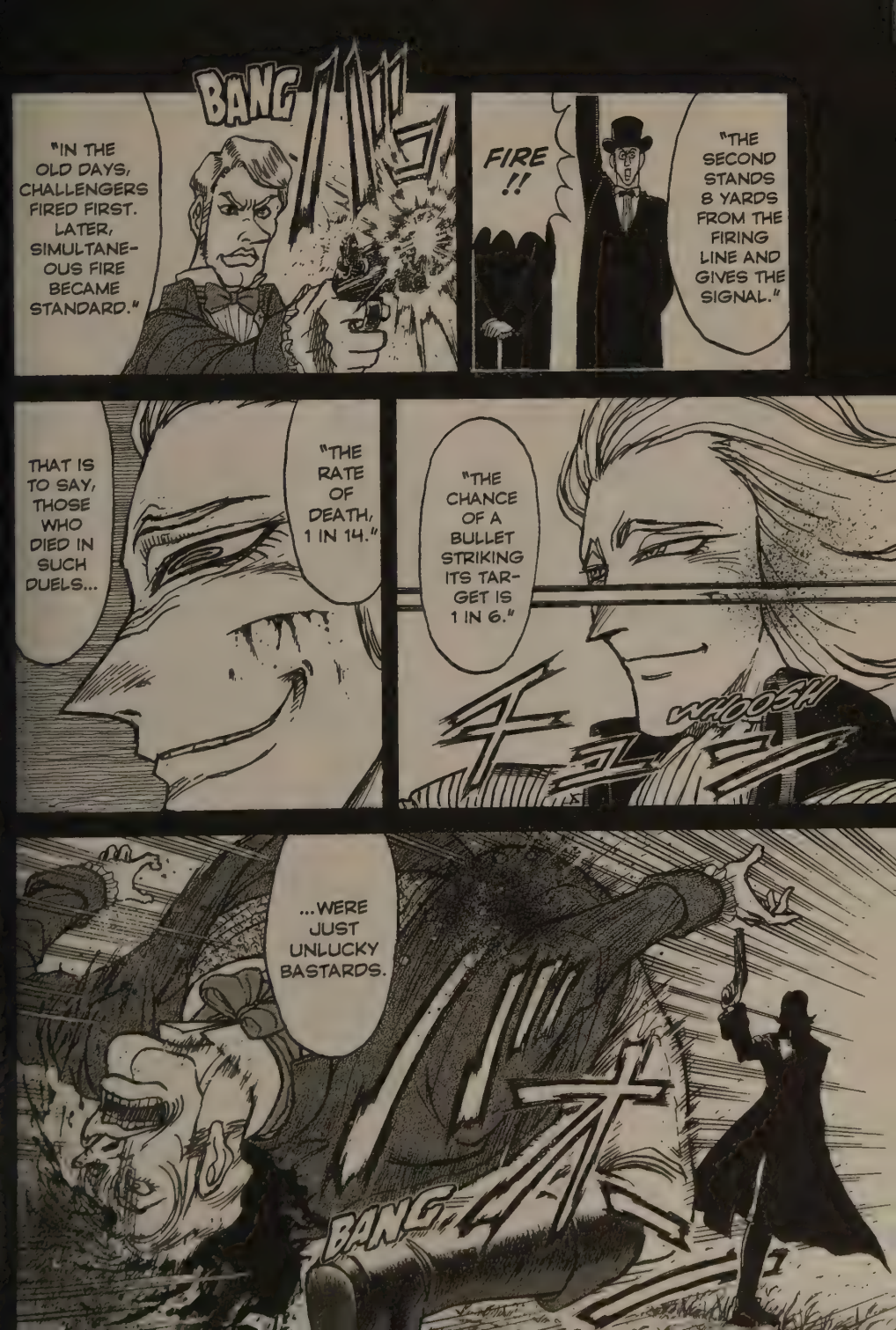

DUELS ...
I'VE NOT HEARD OF ONE HAPPENING IN THIS CENTURY...

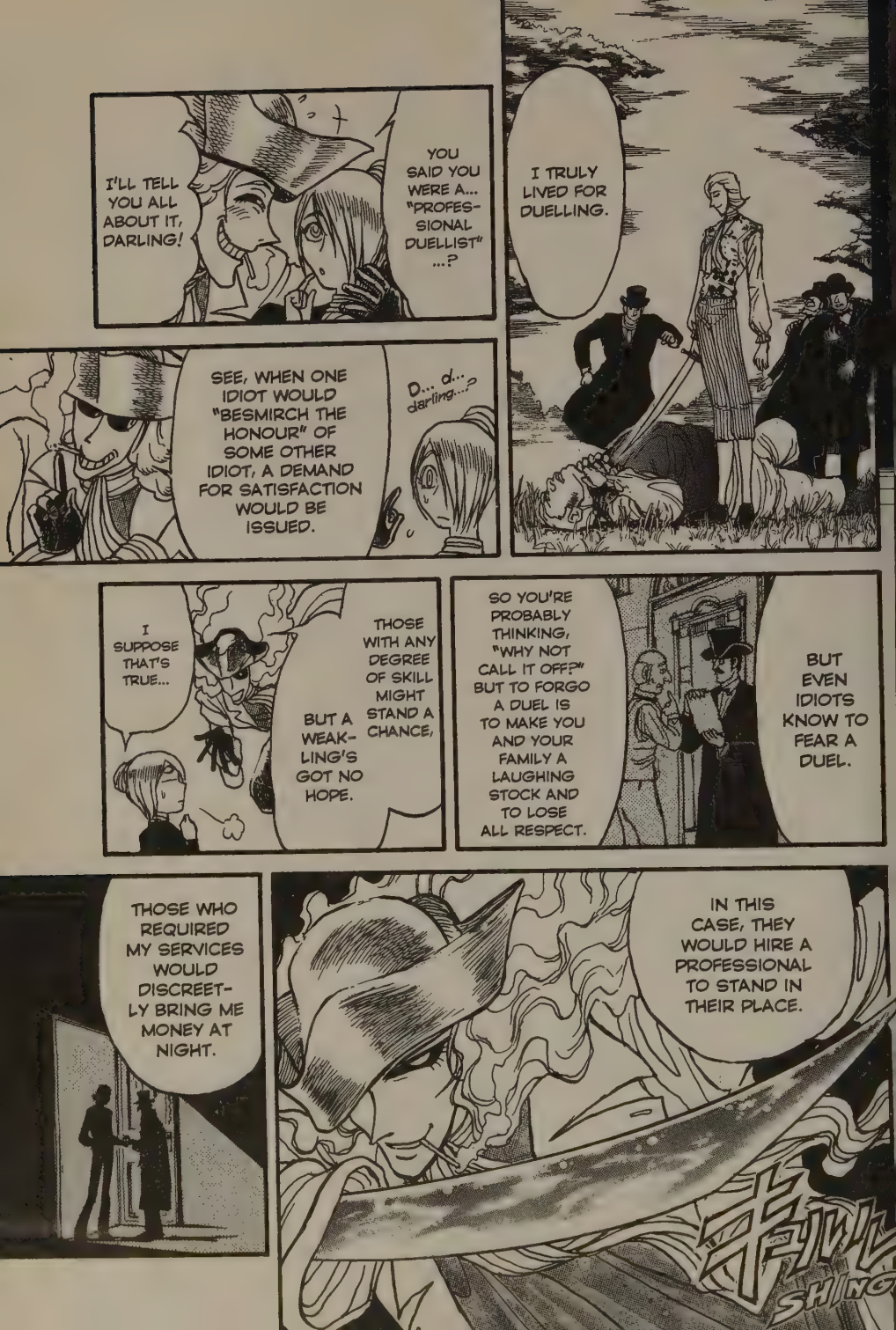
AS A PROFES-SIONAL DUEL-LIST...
...I WAS FAIRLY SKILLED.

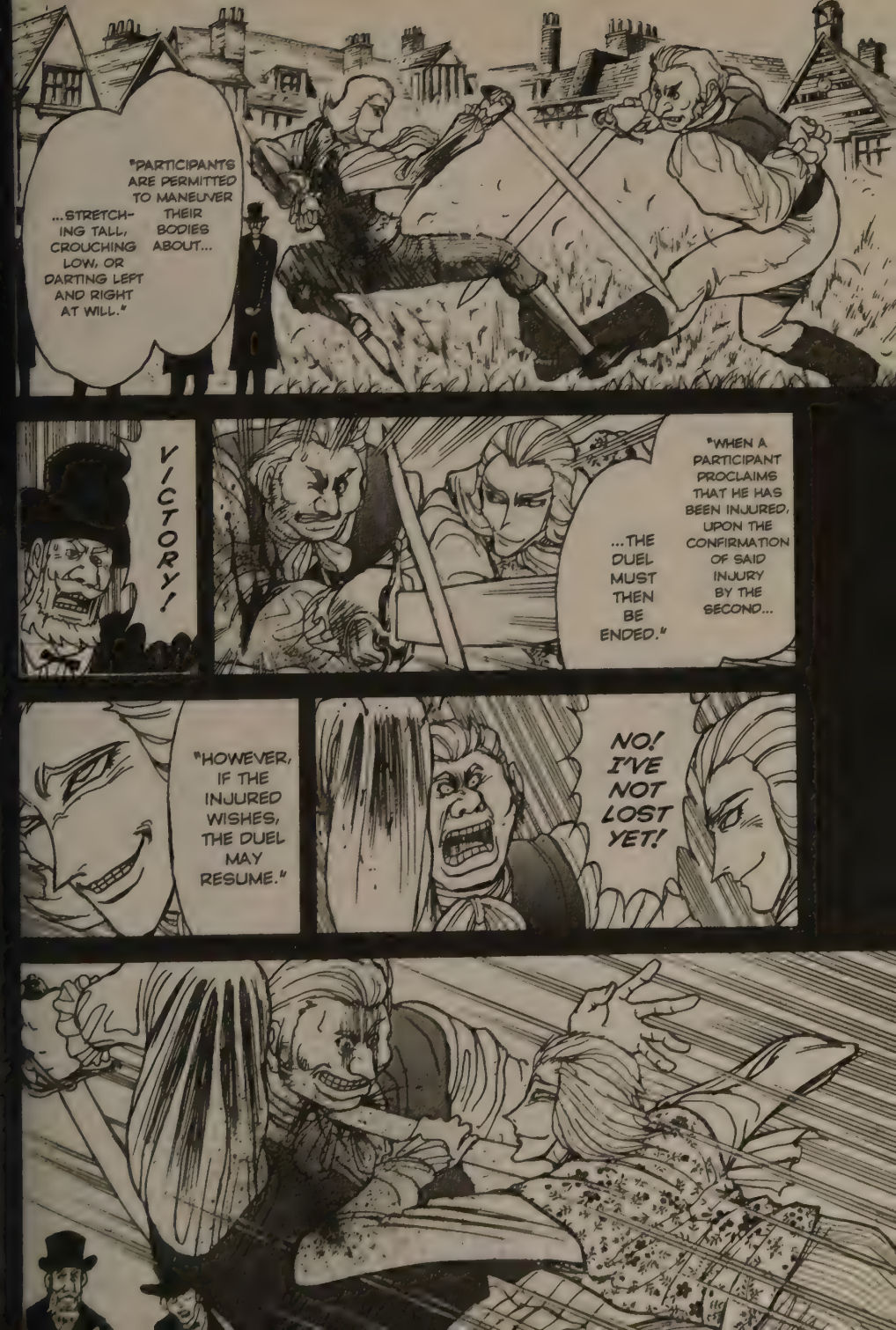

QUEEN VICTORIA ABHORRED THE PRACTICE... SO SHE DECREED IT ILLEGAL IN 1842.


THAT SPOIL-SPORT ...

"SWORDS ARE WIELDED WITH ONLY THE RIGHT HAND— THE LEFT ARM MUST NEVER INTERFERE."
KIN-CHANG
"FOR SWORD DUELLING, THE BLADES MUST BE EQUAL IN LENGTH."


BANG
"IN THE OLD DAYS, CHALLENGERS FIRED FIRST. LATER, SIMULTANEOUS FIRE BECAME STANDARD."
FIRE !!
"THE SECOND STANDS 8 YARDS FROM THE FIRING LINE AND GIVES THE SIGNAL."
THAT IS TO SAY, THOSE WHO DIED IN SUCH DUELS...
"THE RATE OF DEATH, 1 IN 14."
"THE CHANCE OF A BULLET STRIKING ITS TARGET IS 1 IN 6."
WHOOSH
...WERE JUST UNLUCKY BASTARDS.
BANG


I'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT, DARLING!
YOU SAID YOU WERE A... "PROFESSIONAL DUELLIST" ...?
I TRULY LIVED FOR DUELLING.
SEE, WHEN ONE IDIOT WOULD "BESMIRCH THE HONOUR" OF SOME OTHER IDIOT, A DEMAND FOR SATISFACTION WOULD BE ISSUED.
D... d... darling...?
I SUPPOSE THAT'S TRUE...
THOSE WITH ANY DEGREE OF SKILL MIGHT STAND A CHANCE,
BUT A WEAKLING'S GOT NO HOPE.
SO YOU'RE PROBABLY THINKING, "WHY NOT CALL IT OFF?" BUT TO FORGO A DUEL IS TO MAKE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A LAUGHING STOCK AND TO LOSE ALL RESPECT.
BUT EVEN IDIOTS KNOW TO FEAR A DUEL.
THOSE WHO REQUIRED MY SERVICES WOULD DISCREETLY BRING ME MONEY AT NIGHT.
IN THIS CASE, THEY WOULD HIRE A PROFESSIONAL TO STAND IN THEIR PLACE.


"PARTICIPANTS ARE PERMITTED TO MANEUVER THEIR BODIES ABOUT...
...STRETCHING TALL, CROUCHING LOW, OR DARTING LEFT AND RIGHT AT WILL."
VICTORY!
"WHEN A PARTICIPANT PROCLAIMS THAT HE HAS BEEN INJURED, UPON THE CONFIRMATION OF SAID INJURY BY THE SECOND...
...THE DUEL MUST THEN BE ENDED."
"HOWEVER, IF THE INJURED WISHES, THE DUEL MAY RESUME."
NO! I'VE NOT LOST YET!

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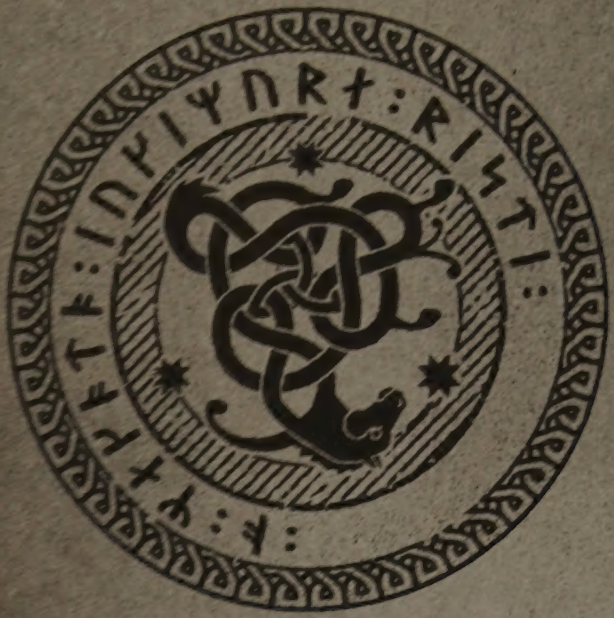

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Troubled Waters

Free at last, Thorfinn sets off on an expedition to Vinland, to establish a place free of war and slavery. In an effort to fund his project, Thorfinn visits Iceland where Halfdan, a wealthy man who shared a dark history with his late father, awaits. Meanwhile, the marriage between Halfdan's son Sigurd and Leif's relative Gudrid is well under way, but Gudrid dreams of becoming a sailor, not a bride. A battle soon breaks out as Gudrid attempts to escape aboard Leif's ship. With Sigurd hot on their tail, Thorfinn and the crew press eastward to the city of Miklagard, picking up an orphaned baby and a dog along the way...

"A fascinating, violent, and moving story [that's] firmly among other timeless classics...Seriously, I don't know how many different ways I can say this manga is worth reading."

—*Kotaku*

"Gripping doesn't begin to describe Vinland Saga. 5 stars."

—*ICv2*

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